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CHAPTERS

FROM

ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS

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CHAPTERS FROM
ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS

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Εὐπραξία γὰρ ἄνευ διανοίας καὶ ἤθους οὐκ ἔστιν.
Arist. Eth. VI. ii. 4.

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TO

M. T. M.

PREFACE.

THESE Chapters have grown out of an attempt to use the Nicomachean Ethics as an introduction to some of the more fundamental conceptions of Moral Philosophy. In spite of the prominent place which the *Ethics* has held for the last generation in English University education, the supply of literature dealing with its leading ideas which is accessible to the general student is singularly deficient. There is, of course, Sir Alexander Grant's great commentary. Grant, however, wrote at a time when both psychology and general philosophy in this country were in a comparatively backward state, and would himself have been the first to admit that the advance which is always being made in these departments of knowledge imposes upon each generation the duty of reinterpreting the ideas of the great writers of the past in terms that correspond to it. His work, moreover, is addressed to professed students, and for the most part presupposes that the reader has the Greek text before him. The need of reinterpretation has, as is

well known, been supplied with signal success by Professor Stewart in his two volumes of *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics*, a book which may well seem to the student to have exhausted the field and made any subsequent commentary in this generation superfluous. Professor Stewart, however, even more than Sir Alexander Grant, writes for scholars, and, as far as the English reader is concerned, leaves the new light he has to throw on Aristotelian study hidden under a bushel of textual criticism and interpretation.

It was this feature of his book that suggested to me that there might be room for an attempt such as that which follows to bring some of the leading conceptions of the *Ethics* into connexion with modern ideas for the sake of the general reader. While this is the main purpose of these Chapters, I venture to hope that they may not be found wholly useless to University students as an introduction both to the *Ethics* and to Moral Philosophy in general.

The form in which they are presented retains marks of their origin in a course of lectures to teachers of which they were the foundation. Their original design further accounts for the conspicuous omission of all reference to Aristotle's famous treatment of Justice in the fifth book, which falls rather to the side of politics than education.

The translation of the Selected Passages is founded on Bywater's classical text. In offering it along with

the preliminary chapters, I have aimed at freeing the original from some of the repetitions and obscurities which, owing to the circumstances under which the *Ethics* was first published, are apt to repel English readers.

Besides my Wife, who read the whole in manuscript and made many suggestions, I have to thank my colleague, Professor E. A. Sonnenschein, for a careful revision of the greater part in proof.

BIRMINGHAM, *January*, 1900.

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CHAPTERS

FROM

ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS.

INTRODUCTION.

MORAL PHILOSOPHY is sometimes thought of as an abstract study which treats of human life out of relation to definite circumstances of time or place. This is to ignore the fact that philosophy, like science, art, and religion, stands in organic relation to the age and nation whose philosophy it is. Springing from the need to express in an orderly system man's deepest thoughts about life and mind, it would be strange if it did not reflect the essential features of the age of which the thinker is a part. This was in a special degree true of the great philosophies in Greece. It is true, indeed, that the speculations of the pre-Socratic philosophers were little coloured by the particular circumstances of the time. This was due partly to the physical character of the speculations themselves and partly to the cosmopolitan character of the thinkers. But it was the glory of Socrates, in directing attention to human life as the proper

subject of investigation, to have brought philosophy down from heaven, and, in doing so, to have given it a home in Greece, and more particularly in Athens. Henceforth it is only possible to understand the leading features of Greek philosophy, whether in Plato, in Aristotle, or in the Stoics and Epicureans, in the light of the circumstances of the time that produced them.

Though not himself born in Athens, nor in Greece proper at all, Aristotle * spent the best part of his life after the age of seventeen in that city, and in all his speculations on the nature of social happiness he has the life of the ordinary Athenian citizen in view. For the outlines of that life the English reader of the *Ethics* must be referred to some good History of Greece, such as Mr. Evelyn Abbott's. We can here only very briefly summarize some of its leading features.

1. It was lived in a city of about one-half the population of Birmingham.† The city was surrounded

* The best accredited dates of his birth and death are 384 B.C. and 322 B.C. He resided at Athens from seventeen to thirty-seven, and from forty-nine to sixty-one, about thirty-two years in all.

† The following estimate, made by Professor Sonnenschein, on the basis of recent researches as to the population of Athens in the 5th century B.C., may be taken as approximately correct.

1. Males who were full citizens, probably	30,000
2. Women and children belonging to free population	70,000
3. Resident aliens at least	10,000
4. Slaves uncertain, but at the very least	100,000
Total	210,000

As the above estimate for women and children is distinctly a low one, and no estimate has been made of freedmen, the number of whom is quite uncertain, we are, perhaps, justified in placing the total home population at something like 250,000, the figure suggested in the text.

by a small agricultural area about the size of Warwickshire, which furnished such portion of its food supply as was not purchased from abroad. Beyond the borders of Attica, both north and south, were other cities of a similar kind—Thebes, Corinth, Argos, Sparta. All these owned a common nationality as the city-homes of Hellenes. Otherwise they formed independent communities, each with its own form of government, its own separate interests, and its own foreign policy.

While the bounds of these city-states were thus narrower than anything with which we are acquainted, within these bounds the life of the citizens was much simpler and more homogeneous than in any modern community even of the same size. In the aforementioned population there were probably not more than thirty thousand who possessed the rights and owed to one another the obligations of free and equal citizens. Below these and the class of free-born women and children belonging to them, stood the larger portion of the inhabitants, consisting of traders, artisans, and agricultural labourers, who, for the most part, were either slaves or aliens. Within the narrow class of fully privileged citizens, moreover, there were few, if any, of the divisions which separate one portion of a modern community from another, and tend to obscure the common duty which the members owe to the state or municipality. There were as yet no deep religious differences, no Catholics and Protestants, no Church and Dissent, no strongly marked division between labour and capital, rich and poor, town and country. It is

true that most cities were divided into two great political parties—the oligarchical and the democratic —one or other of which was always ready to call in foreign aid. But, as has been well observed, the very intensity of this political rivalry bore witness to the vividness with which the members of all parties realized their interest in the prize of victory.

2. It was a public life, or, at any rate, a life in public. It follows from what has just been said that the chief influences which moulded the character of the citizens were different from those which operate on the members of a modern community. Professor Marshall has suggested that the factor which in modern life is * of most importance in the formation of character is the business by which a man earns his livelihood. But in the ancient world of the Greek republics the typical citizen had no business in the modern sense of the word. He was not engaged to any extent in earning his livelihood by trade or profession. It is true that he spent part of his time in the management of his own private affairs. But this consisted to a large extent in the administration of property which he had for the most part inherited, and was always subordinated to his public and especially to his military duties. These latter came nearer than anything else to what we might call his "profession." Every citizen was also a soldier. At no period—we might say on no day—of his life was he free from the liability to be called upon to take the field in defence of his country and hearth,

* With the exception of his religion.

or in support of a foreign ally. We naturally think of the military side of Greek life as developed chiefly in the Doric states, and notably in Sparta, where mothers bade their sons return "with their shields or upon them." But it was equally the first duty of the citizens elsewhere to bear arms when occasion required it. At Athens all alike on coming of age had to take a solemn oath that they would neither disgrace their shield nor desert a fellow-soldier;* and we know that Socrates, who in this as in other things may be taken as representative, served on at least three separate occasions in the Athenian army.

An illustration of the way in which the Athenian gentleman of the 4th century B.C. combined private business with military training, has come down to us in the vivid picture which Xenophon draws in his *Oeconomicus*.† Socrates there asks Ischomachus how he manages it, to which he replies, "I have been in the habit, Socrates, of rising at an hour when if I should wish to see anybody I am likely to find him at home. If I have any business to do in town, I make this serve as a walk. But if I do not require to go into town, my servant leads my horse into the country, and I take my walk in the same direction and with more profit than if I paced up and down the arcade. When I get out into the country, if I find any of my workmen planting trees, or digging,

* The form of oath is preserved in slightly different forms in Stobæus, *Flor.* xliii. 48, and Pollux, viii. 105. An additional clause is mentioned by Plutarch, *Alcib.* 15, and Cicero, *de Repub.* iii. 9.

† xi. § 13.

or sowing, or harvesting, I examine the methods they are employing, and make any suggestion I may have for improving them. I then mount my horse and take a ride, as nearly as possible resembling the kind we have to be prepared for in actual war, avoiding neither slant nor steep, ditch nor canal, only taking care as far as possible not to lame my horse over it. After this my servant lets him have a roll, and then leads him off, taking with him anything we may require in town, while I make my way home—sometimes at a walk, sometimes running. After that I have a rub down. Then I lunch, taking just enough to get through the day without feeling empty and at the same time without overloading my stomach."

"The day," so far as it was devoted to business, was occupied with his public duties, strictly so called. They consisted of attendance on the various meetings and committees by which the government was carried on. He might be a member of the Senate, in which case he might have to consider the kind of question which we associate with a cabinet council—the preparation of bills for presentation to the popular assembly or the superintendence of administration. He would certainly be a member of the legislative Assembly, and his vote might be called for in an election of public officers or an important debate on foreign policy. As a member of the executive he might have to preside at such a meeting. Or, again, as a member of one of the permanent bands of jurymen he might have to spend his day in judicial administration.

3. It was rounded by leisure. The above account

of the occupations which filled up the time of the ordinary Greek citizen in the century preceding that in which Plato and Aristotle wrote, would be incomplete if no mention were made of another feature of Greek life—the leisure which it left and was designed to leave. The Greek citizen did not live for arms or for politics any more than for bread alone. He was a creature of large discourse, and had an outlook on a larger world than that of his soldiership, his private business, or even his public duties. This world was represented by the buildings and statues that were daily before his eyes; by the great religious festivals that divided the year, culminating in dramatic representations, where questions of fate, free-will, and the government of the world were worked out before his eyes; by the gymnasia or social clubs where friends met for free discussion of current topics; and last, but not least, by the schools of the philosophers, which, as politics declined, became more and more the meeting-ground of the abler and more ardent spirits.

From all this it is easy to understand that his citizenship or his fellowship with citizens was the prominent fact in the life of the Greek of the 5th and 4th centuries before Christ. It was impossible to miss this feature or to describe the full and satisfying life without a reference to it. To be a good citizen and to be recognized and appreciated by fellow-citizens was to be a happy man, and to be a good citizen in the full sense meant not only to be a brave soldier, an economical and liberal manager of property, but

a just judge and a wise administrator. And if these things did not satisfy, behind them all, and made possible by them, there was the refined enjoyment of all that makes life most worth living—art, literature, science, and philosophy.

Understanding the *facts* that Aristotle had before him in this light, the reader will have less difficulty in finding his bearings among the distinctions and definitions in which the philosopher attempts to express what is of permanent human interest in them. Thus, when we are told that "man is a political being," * we shall understand that Aristotle means more than that his physical needs make union with others a necessity to him. It is of course true that human societies in their origin are unions of individuals or families for the purpose of furnishing food and protection. But they are more. Political organization is necessary to enable man to develop the best that is in him. "Society," says Aristotle, "originates in the need of a livelihood, but it exists for the sake of life."

Similarly, when Aristotle goes on to define the conditions of the good or happy life as the efficient discharge of functions, we shall be prepared to understand that by functions he means the actions that are distinctive of the man and the citizen. It is true that the functions of the man have their roots deep down

* The phrase in *Ethics*, I. c. vii. § 6, is "Man is by nature a citizen;" in IX. c. ix. § 3, "Man is a political being and made for society." In *Politics*, III. c. vi. § 3, the full phrase occurs, "Man is a creature naturally designed for life in a city-state."

in organic functions common to him with the animals, and that the individual comes in point of time before the citizen. But the one class of functions are only in Aristotle's language the potentiality of the other; the functions of man's animal and individual nature find their end and justification in the relation they bear to the functions he is called upon to exercise to the best of his power as a member of a civilized community.

Again, when, going on to define wherein excellence in this discharge of function consists, Aristotle propounds the now familiar doctrine that excellence or virtue is a "mean," we shall be the less likely to misapprehend his teaching, as is not uncommonly done. We shall know that the "mean" must be understood in relation to the permanent ends of the citizen, not to an arbitrarily chosen standard of what is prudent or consistent with good taste in the individual. We shall thus be prepared to find that Aristotle regards his own definition as inadequate to express the full meaning of virtue. When we are seeking for a formal definition we may describe the good act as a mean, yet when we look to its essential nature it is an extreme—the best that can be done.

Again, when, passing beyond the attempt to fix in what sense the cardinal virtues or capacities of the Greek citizen—his courage, his self-command, his liberality—are a mean, we come to the relation of the virtuous life to the highest form of good living open to man, viz. the life of reason or complete self-consciousness, we shall be prepared to hear of other conditions

that must be added to virtue in its narrower sense. We have seen that the virtues of the private citizen, or even of the citizen-soldier, fall short of a complete equipment for the citizen's functions. To these have to be added the capacities of the legislator and administrator, which, when we seek to analyze them, are all seen to centre in the one supreme capacity of insight into the true purpose of social life and the means by which it may be forwarded through the right conduct of the citizens.

Finally, we shall be prepared to understand an extension of the ideal of happiness which might at first first appear inconsistent with the civic ideal already described. In his enthusiasm for the life which is "self-sufficient, leisurely, inexhaustible," something, in truth, more than human, Aristotle may appear to have overshot the mark and drawn too deep a line between week-day and sabbath. Whatever explanation we may be able to give of this dualism in so great a thinker, what has been said above of the function of art and religion among the Greeks will enable us partly to understand what is meant by such a claim. As the Parthenon crowned the Acropolis, the Great Dionysia the Athenian year, so the life of leisure was the crown of the secular employments of the citizen's life. As, however, his art and his poetry were never thought of by the Greek as something apart from his common life, but as palpable witnesses to its inward and spiritual meaning, so leisure and contemplation were not something superadded to the other ends of life, but a means of enabling the citizen to realize more

fully what these ends imply. Through them he thought he knew

> "The hills where his life rose
> And the sea where it goes."

Through them he thought he saw that in renouncing merely individual ends he was identifying himself with one that was greater and more permanent, and yet, in a deeper sense, his own.

CHAPTER I.

THE SCIENCE OF ETHICS.

"All indistinctly apprehend a bliss
On which the soul may rest, the hearts of all
Yearn after it, and to that wished bourn
All therefore strive."

DANTE.

§ 1. *The Supreme End of Action as the Subject of Ethics.*

[*Ethics*, Bk. I. c. i.; c. ii. § 1.]

IN the opening sentence of the Ethics Aristotle states the fundamental assumption of his moral philosophy, viz. that all human conduct—"all action directed by choice"—implies some final end or purpose. By this, as the sequel shows, he means not only that all conduct involves a consciously conceived end or purpose—such a proposition would be merely verbal, seeing that "choice" necessarily implies conscious purpose—but that underneath all our ordinary purposes there lies, whether clearly conceived or not, some supreme purpose which is both the source and explanation of them. That such a supreme end actually is presupposed in ordinary life is not immediately obvious. True, we do not ordinarily conceive of our lives as

broken up into isolated activities standing in no relation to one another. This would be the negation of all *conduct*—all leading or guiding of action. Yet it is equally remote from ordinary ways of thinking to conceive of life as organized for the attainment of some supreme all-important end. *Prima facie*, life is the endeavour to satisfy a multitude of desires, which are endless in their recurrence and insatiable in their extent, and it is not a little curious that modern philosophy in England, so far from accepting it as self-evident that life is a rounded whole in the sense here assumed, starts from the opposite assumption by emphatically denying it. At the beginning of the chapters in his great treatise which are devoted to the principles of morals, or as he calls them "manners," Hobbes, the acknowledged father of English philosophy, lays it down that "the felicity of this life consisteth not in the repose of a mind satisfied. For there is no such *finis ultimus*, utmost aim, nor *summum bonum*, greatest good, as is spoken of in the books of the old moral philosophers. . . . Felicity is a continual progress of the desire, from one object to another, the attaining of the former being still but the way to the latter. The cause whereof is that the object of man's desire is not to enjoy once only, and for one instant of time, but to assure for ever the way of his future desire. . . . So that in the first place I put for a general inclination of all mankind a perpetual and restless desire of power after power that ceaseth only in death. And the cause of this is not always that a man hopes for a more intensive delight than he has

already attained to, or that he cannot be content with a moderate power; but because he cannot assure the power and means to live well, which he hath present, without the acquisition of more." * Nor does it appear that the view here taken is at all met by the statement put forward by Aristotle in support of his assumption (viz. that otherwise we should have to go into infinity and leave our desires without point or purpose), seeing that Hobbes would have been ready to accept this conclusion, and actually makes it, in the passage quoted, the ground of his denial of a supreme end of action.

Further reflection, however, especially if directed, as Aristotle suggests in chap. i., to the organized structure of society, will convince us that, however we may define the nature of the chief end of human desire (and this is not here the question), some such supreme end is presupposed in the very form of social life. Hobbes himself, when his doctrine is examined more closely, is found to admit that the activities of individuals and the organization of society find their motive and explanation in one ruling desire. His theory differs from Aristotle's not in dispensing with the notion of a *finis ultimus* or greatest good, but in the account which it gives of the nature of the end. According to Hobbes, it is the maximum satisfaction of the individual desire for "gain and glory;" according to Aristotle, it is the fullest development of man's nature as a social being.

* *Leviathan*, c. xi.

§ 2. *General Character of the Science.*

[I. cc. ii., iii.]

The remainder of chap. ii. and the first part of chap. iii. give us two general features of the science.

1. It is the science of man as a citizen. It is significant that Aristotle nowhere describes it as "ethics." It is true that to him as to us it is the science of character (ἦθος), but to describe it in this way would have been doubly misleading from Aristotle's point of view. In the first place, it would have failed to bring out the central fact that not only in its origin, but in its contents, good character is essentially social. And, secondly, it would have left no room for the distinction, so vital in Aristotle's view, between the virtue or excellence which consists in good character, and that higher kind of excellence which consists in intelligence and insight. We are here mainly concerned with the former point. Man, we have seen, is "a political being." It is impossible to consider his good or happiness apart from that of the community in which he lives.

Discussing the question whether the virtue of the good man and the good citizen is the same, in a passage which ought to be read as a comment upon this (*Politics*, iii. c. 4), Aristotle replies that it is so when the state-organization is really constitutional or "political," *i.e.* when it permits the individual to develop as nature intended him into the free citizen of a self-governing community.

It might indeed appear as though the words of

c. ii. § 8,* were incompatible with this interpretation. But in this section, as Professor Stewart has pointed out, Aristotle must not be supposed to be distinguishing between the good of the community at large—"the greatest happiness of the greatest number"—and the private good of the single member of it. Rather, he is distinguishing between the life of the man who is surrounded by all that is best in civilized life—its opportunities for social service on the one side, and self-culture on the other—and that of the same man when accidentally separated, whether by exile (like Aristides), or imprisonment (like Socrates), from all that makes life attractive. In the former case, all that is best in him is called forth. He lives in the life of his country—his country lives in him. He is what nature intended him to be. In the latter, all that is best in him is suppressed. He lives in a mutilated, semi-animate way, and is only the shadow of his former self.

2. It is inexact. We may agree to accept the distinction that Aristotle draws between exact and inexact sciences. Some sciences, of which mathematics is a type, admit of exact reasoning from principles easily grasped and universally acknowledged. Others, like psychology, rest on principles reached by a somewhat precarious process of induction, in the application of which great caution has to be observed. Most people

* "And even though this [the good] is the same for individuals and communities, yet the good of the community is grander and more sufficing to lay hold of and to keep. For though we may often rest satisfied with merely individual good, yet the good of a nation or a state is nobler and more divine."

would also agree in assigning ethics or politics, as Aristotle does, to the latter class. But it is not so clear what they would mean by doing so. It may, therefore, be worth while dwelling a moment on the reason why we should agree with Aristotle in this classification. It clearly is not because it is not possible to know what is exactly right in matters of conduct as in mathematics. There are principles here, as in Euclid, which require that conduct shall be of a certain definite kind.

We shall see what really is meant if we consider for a moment the conditions that enter into a problem in exact science, *e.g.* mathematics, and compare them with those that set a problem in conduct. The difference is that the conditions in mathematics are abstract; in ethics they are concrete. It may seem paradoxical to claim for moral philosophy that it is a concrete science. We usually think of it as one of the most abstract. But from the point of view of its subject-matter this is clearly not the case. While the subject-matter of mathematics is number and figure, *i.e.* abstract properties or things, ethics has to do with concrete things or events themselves—the wholes, we might say, of which these properties are parts. Even this does not fully express what we mean in claiming for ethics that it is the science of the concrete. There is a point of view from which concrete things and events themselves may be regarded as abstractions, being merely points of interest in a context which gives them meaning. It is this context—the whole of which things or events

are parts—that forms the subject-matter of the science of ethics. All conduct takes place in a context; it must have regard to a situation. The man who would act rightly must attend to the diverse elements or conditions—things, persons, events—which the situation contains. Success in conduct just consists in taking all of these elements or conditions into account. It follows from what has just been said that while the problems of a science like mathematics may repeat themselves, exactly the same problem presenting itself to different individuals or to the same individual at different times, the conditions of a moral problem are such that they can never recur. Situations *like* one another of course do occur; if they did not, moral habits would be impossible, and the burden of responsibility in adapting our conduct to them would be intolerable. Yet they are never identical. "Circumstances," we say, "alter cases;" to which we may add that cases alter circumstances. Two individuals are never in the same circumstances. We may go further and say that the same individual is never really in the same circumstances twice. Morality, as Professor Alexander says, never repeats itself. From which it follows that though ethics, like other sciences, has its principles and general rules, *e.g.* the ten commandments, the application of them is essentially a matter of individual judgment, and no conduct can be moral conduct which is simply an application of a rule of thumb.

This difference explains the saying in chap. iii.

that young men are not, as a rule, good students of moral philosophy. If it is true that the solution of a moral problem depends on the power of adapting conduct to context or environment—of "hitting off" the situation—it clearly implies two things in the agent. In the first place, it implies the power of taking in a situation as a whole: the quality we call judgment, insight, wisdom. In the second place, it implies freedom from the bias of passion, by which judgment is apt to be warped. But both of these qualifications are apt to be absent in youth; the first because insight into a situation depends not so much on the training of any special faculty (as does, for example, mathematical ability) as upon experience of like situations in the past; the second because "young men, moreover, are apt to be swayed by passion." The characteristic addition that after all "the defect is not a matter of time, but consists in their living according to passion, and following the objects which passion suggests," reminding us that youth alone is not sufficient to disqualify or age to qualify for deriving benefit from the study, brings us to the last of the questions touched upon in these sections, viz. that of the practical value of the science of ethics.

§ 3. *The Practical Value of Ethics.*

[I. c. ii. § 2, and c. iii. § 7.]

Two remarks bear upon this question. (1) In c. iii. § 7, Aristotle notices the conditions under which it can be of any value at all. To those who live according

to passion, and follow the objects which passion suggests, he tells us "knowledge is of little avail." From which it follows that whatever the value of ethics, we ought not to expect it to change a man's life. So far from a man's habits of choice being the outcome of his ethical theory, his theory of life, as we shall see hereafter, is commonly the reflection of his habitual pursuits. Moral philosophy can only make explicit the principle which unconsciously controls his actions. It cannot give principle to them. The man without principle is thus without the "data" of ethics. He may get up the science as he might get up a subject for an examination, but he will have no fine understanding of it, and as a consequence it will have no effect upon his life.* (2) Under other circumstances, however, Aristotle claims for the study in c. ii. § 2, an important function in relation to practice. "Surely to know what this Good is, is a matter of practical importance, for in that case we shall be as archers shooting at a definite mark, and shall be more likely to do what is right." Let us try to see clearly what is meant by this claim.

Current phrases are apt here to be misleading. We hear, for instance, of "applied" as distinguished from theoretic ethics, as if ethics, like mathematics or mechanics, laid down rules or formulæ which merely required to be applied to particular cases in which all the factors might be determined beforehand. We have already seen how fallacious any such analogy must necessarily be. Moral conduct is of course ruled

* Cf. c. iv. § 6, p. 216 below.

or regulated conduct, but the principle of regulation is adequacy to changing situations and not conformity to any system of rules and regulations. But because ethical knowledge is of no use for "application" in this sense, it does not follow that it has no practical bearing on life.

As theory it serves the same function with respect to its object as any other science does, and this, from the nature of the case, seeing that ethics is the science of conduct ("three-fourths of life"), is a practical one. This will be clear if we consider for a moment what this function is.

Theory is sometimes thought of as concerned with general laws, and therefore as the antithesis of fact and reality. But this, of course, is a misunderstanding. The function of theory is not to carry us away into a region of abstraction and comparative unreality, but to put us into closer touch with fact. It is the process by which we deepen our hold upon the world about us, and thus vivify the impressions we receive from it. To know, for example, the theory of the life of flowers is to know any particular flower more fully, more vividly, more *really*. Applying this to ethics, or the science of the right end of life, the result of determining the nature of this end, so far as we succeed in doing so, will be to strengthen our hold upon life and deepen our sense of its reality. Whether such theoretic understanding of the meaning of right conduct is necessary in order that our conduct may be really right; whether there is any sense in which in spite of the above admissions it may be said to be

sufficient of itself to secure right conduct, *i.e.* whether there is any sense in which, as Socrates held, virtue is knowledge; whether again philosophy in the strict sense is the only way in which such knowledge is acquired—are questions that will meet us hereafter. It is sufficient here to have pointed out that ethics, by dwelling upon the relation of action to end and of our different ends to one another, tends to vivify our apprehension of the meaning of conduct, and in doing so to alter its character.* It is thus that, by bringing into clear consciousness ends previously accepted without conscious understanding of their value, it helps to make apparent the incompatibility of some of those ends with others, and suggests the possibility of so organizing life as to avoid misdirection of activity and keep it to channels in which it may really contribute to the one end of supreme value.†

This relation between theory and practice is well illustrated by the order of treatment in the *Ethics* and *Politics*. As in Plato, so in Aristotle, the discussion which begins with more abstract questions concerning the Good as the supreme End of life naturally leads to suggestions for the reorganization of life with a view to making it more directly contributory to this end—ethical analysis to schemes of education and government.

* For a fuller statement see *Philosophy in Relation to Life* (*Ethical World* Publishing Co.).

† See Green's *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 268. The whole passage should be consulted on the subject of this and the next paragraph.

§ 4. *Special Value of Greek Theory.*

But the English student, with such brilliant illustrations before him as are afforded by the utilitarian school of reformers, is not so likely to doubt the practical value of ethical study as the value of approaching it for modern purposes through the speculations of an ancient philosopher; and a word seems required in conclusion to justify this method.

There are two special advantages in approaching the study of ethics through the great Greek philosophers, one of which has been already touched upon.

1. We are here placed from the outset at the right point of view with regard to the nature of man whose ends we are investigating. It is the good of man as a citizen, or member of a community, not of man as an individual, which is the subject-matter in ethics. The good of the individual ought never to be separated from the good of the whole of which he is a part—ethics from politics. Some of the great English ethical writers have obscured this point, and more recent methods of study, by connecting ethics with biology, have not tended to correct this error. As the biologist finds the source and type of all life in the single cell, it is assumed that moral science begins with individuals as independent units who by their union form the "aggregate" we call society. In this way a presumption is established at the outset in favour of a separation of individual from social well-being, and the separation once made, the problem of their harmonious union becomes insoluble.* Aristotle

* See below, p. 184.

never wavers on this head. He lays it down, as we have seen from the outset, that man is primarily a member of a community. He is of course well aware that in the order of time (as we might say from the point of view of sociology), the individual, or at least the family, comes before the state. But this does not affect the question of the true nature and end of man, with which ethics is concerned. From this point of view Aristotle has no doubt that the state comes first. "In the order of nature the state is prior to the household and the individual, as the whole is prior to the part." * It is true, of course, that modern ethics does not confine itself to the consideration of man in his functions as citizen. In laying emphasis on the value of human personality we have passed beyond the limits of Greek nationalism. But this does not mean that we have substituted the idea of individuals to whose happiness social union merely stands at best as means to an end, for that of citizens the end and purpose of whose being is a highly-organized form of social life. It merely means that we have enlarged our conception of the range of man's organic connections. It is as untrue now as it was in the time of Aristotle to claim that a man's life is his own. It belongs to him not as an individual but as a member of a community. The difference is that the community is no longer conceived of as bounded by a city wall or a neighbouring range of mountains, but as co-extensive with humanity. Once, however, the principle is grasped with respect to the smaller unity of the Greek city-state

* *Politics*, I. c. ii. § 12. See Note **A**, where the passage is quoted at length.

—and it is Aristotle's merit to have stated this in the most unmistakable terms—it is easy to extend it to the altered circumstances of modern times.*

2. We are placed at the right point of view with regard to the true nature of goodness as an end in itself. Modern writers, by laying emphasis on the *consequences* of action in abstraction from the attitude of the will, or the state of the desires of which action is the expression, have often tended to represent virtue as a means. This confusion is perhaps most clearly marked in writers of the so-called Hedonist school, who represent an attendant circumstance of action, viz. the pleasure produced by it, as the source of its moral value. By his clear grasp of the truth that no action is truly good but that which is done for its own sake, or as he puts it, "because it is a fine thing," Aristotle frees ethics from the difficulty and confusion thus imported into it. Upon this head his teaching is, in fact, as Green says, final. His account of the nature of moral excellence itself was in a sense merely formal, and, as we have already seen, necessarily provisional. But that purity of heart in the sense of a conscious direction of the will to its attainment was the condition of all true virtue, and constituted the essential unity between one form of virtue and another — this he taught with a consistency and directness that left nothing to be desired.†

* Speaking of Aristotle's statement that man is born to be a citizen (see above, p. 8, n.), Sir Frederick Pollock says: "There is hardly a saying in Greek literature so well worn as this; nor is there any that has worn better" (*History of the Science of Politics*, p. 18).

† See Note B.

CHAPTER II.

OPINIONS AS TO THE NATURE OF HAPPINESS.

"Other good
There is where man finds not his happiness;
It is not true fruition, not that blest
Essence, of every good the branch and root."

DANTE.

§ 1. *Starting-point and Method of Discussion.*

[I. iv. §§ 1–4.]

ARISTOTLE assumes that there will be no difference of opinion as to the general description of the end or good. All agree to call it Happiness. Among ourselves we should not find probably the same general agreement on this head, owing to the confusion of happiness in the wider sense with happiness in the narrower, the permanent state with the transient feeling, variously described as satisfaction, gratification, pleasure. The Greeks had two words, which were quite separate in their minds, the one indicating a quality of life as a whole (*εὐδαιμονία*), the other the feeling accompanying a momentary state (*ἡδονή*). It is itself a step in the right direction to note at the outset that we may admit that all

seek after happiness, without committing ourselves to the view that the good is pleasure.

In the discussion of the true nature of happiness thus defined, Aristotle has not far to seek for his starting-point. The conception of the chief good seems, as Grant points out,* to have been vaguely present before people's minds, and besides philosophical definitions, such as the "absolute good" of Plato (alluded to in c. i. § 3), Aristotle had before him several popular opinions which had already fixed upon one or other of the elements which required to be united in a complete definition. In what follows we have an excellent example of Aristotle's scientific method. Beginning with common opinions which, in contrast to Plato, he treats with the respect due to instinctive presentiments of the truth (cc. iv., v., vii.),† he works inward to the definition which he seeks (c. vii. § 9 foll.). From this he returns to current opinions (c. viii.), with the view of confirming his own account by showing that it differs from them only in stating fully and explicitly the truth of which they are a partial and confused expression.

§ 2. *Digression on the True Foundation of Ethical Theory.*

[I. c. iv. §§ 5–7.]

But before proceeding to the examination of current opinions we are brought back to the question of the general character of our study, and the important but

* *Ethics of Aristotle*, vol. i. p. 102. † Cp. X. ii. 4 (p. 301).

somewhat obscure passage which follows deals with the problem of the kind of knowledge or experience on which an ethical theory must be built. Every science starts from some previous knowledge of the student. What we *discover* is a continuation of, or, rather, is a development out of, what we know already. But if we ask what we mean by "knowing," we see that there are two senses in which we may be said to know a thing. We may know it simply as an object of sense-perception or "matter of fact." In this sense a child, or a savage, or any of us in ordinary moments may know a house. Or, secondly, we may know it as an illustration of a law or principle. In this sense an architect may know a house as illustrating certain principles of mechanics or of art. In the first of these cases we may say the house is "known to the individual." The knowledge differs according to the individual point of view. We might even say each individual sees a different house. In the second case we have knowledge "in the strict sense of the term;" knowledge, that is, of something which is the same for all, and is independent of time and circumstances. Now, there is no doubt a sense in which this latter kind of knowledge is "nearer to us," and may be said to come first. Laws and principles touch us on the side most characteristic of us as men, viz. our thought.* Moreover, they come first in that they represent the controlling factors in the process whereby the thing comes to be what it is. On the other hand, the

* "Principles," says one of the commentators, "are more intimately known because they are of the inner essence of mind."

particular thing may be said to be nearer to us in the sense that it is an object of sense-perception rather than of thought. For the same reason it also may be said to come first, seeing we know through sense before we know through intelligence. While, then, knowledge of the principle may be said to be first in importance —whether looked at from the point of view of nature, which produces, or mind, which understands things— the knowledge of the "fact" is first in time.

All this being so, the answer to the question with which we started becomes clear. In the study of ethics and politics, as in other concrete sciences, we must begin with the actual facts of social life—the moral judgments of the citizens and the actual form which civil life takes, as represented by its laws and institutions. It is true that these judgments and institutions have come to be what they are by the more or less conscious effort of individuals to realize a social good. In this sense the Good may be said to be nearer to us and come first. The ideal towards which society is developing is that which makes us what we most truly are. On the other hand, in the process of realizing in consciousness what the nature of this ideal is, as in knowledge in general, we must begin with the facts of ordinary sense experience. As Professor Stewart puts it: "Happiness is the Final Cause of Life. The various 'virtues' are naturally subsequent to it as being its *effects*, *i.e.* as being what they are in virtue of it, just as the hand is a hand in virtue of the body; but they are more evident to us than it is, *i.e.* we learn (under the influence of

moral training) to discriminate practically, or in our habitual conduct between good and bad actions, before we can form a notion of life as a great whole, and understand why and how they are good and bad; accordingly, we must begin our study of moral science with this merely empirical 'knowledge of the virtues,' and rise from it to the knowledge of their cause—happiness." *

But here a difficulty suggests itself: "How," it may be asked, "from the merely empirical knowledge of the facts of the moral life, *e.g.* acts of courage, can we rise to a knowledge of their cause or principle? These facts are, or appear to be, merely particular physical events happening here and now, whereas the end or good is *ex hypothesi* a principle of conscious direction, ideal and therefore universal. What is the connexion between fact and principle by which we may ascend from the one to the other?" The answer is that the facts we spoke of as forming the starting-point are not merely particular physical events. As the outcome of "character," *i.e.* a general habit of the will, they are something far more. Thus the acts of courage, temperance, etc., which form the starting-point of moral science, are not mere isolated events, but represent a fixed character or habit of acting in a particular way, which has been acquired either under the unconscious pressure of social opinion or the influence of teachers conscious of the end they wish to promote. Through habit or character, therefore, the

* *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics*, vol. i. p. 54. In this and in other quotations I have substituted the English for Greek terms.

facts are already more than mere facts. They are facts that embody a principle, and may thus form the starting-point of an inquiry which is to issue in the knowledge of a principle.

This explains why at the outset (I. iii. 5 foll.) so much emphasis was laid upon character as a condition of the profitable study of ethics. Apart from character moral judgments are sounding phrases—mere physical facts—coming home to a man with as little conviction as verses of poetry to one who is drunk.* The man of good character, on the other hand, is already well on the way to a true moral philosophy. Aristotle seems, indeed, to go even further, and to say he does not require one. This, of course, is true, in a sense, of ordinary life; but if taken generally would contradict what has already been said about the practical value of philosophy. What is meant is that while a knowledge of the reason or principle is not necessary for ordinary life (men would not, as a rule, understand it—habit, and the accompanying *opinion* that the things habitually done are good, being in this case sufficient), for the teacher and the politician such a knowledge is essential. They are concerned with the genesis of the citizen, and you might as well expect an architect to build good houses without a knowledge of the principles of his profession, as a teacher or a law-giver to produce good citizens without a knowledge of the principles which underlie our actions and judgments.

* Cp. *Ethics*, VII. c. iii. § 13.

§ 3. *Character and Opinion.*

[I. c. v. § 1.]

The next section contains a further illustration of the relation between character and opinion. The order of thought may be put as follows. In chap. iv. § 3, Aristotle has reminded us that a man's opinions are frequently influenced by the circumstances in which he finds himself—the state of his health, his purse, or his mind, at the time. In chap. v. he goes further, and traces the origin of definite theories of the chief end of life to the habitual preferences of those who hold them. The common order is not, he tells us, first to seek for a true theory of conduct and then proceed to order one's life in accordance with it. On the contrary, a man's choice of life comes first, and reflects itself in any theory he may have occasion afterwards to formulate. Some, "influenced by the lives they lead," * "like the slaves that they are," hold that pleasure is the good. Others, again, "with a practical turn," prefer to make honour the end. But after what has been said in the intermediate sections, this is only what we might expect to find. "Show me a man," Aristotle there seems to have said, "who is accustomed to do what is right, and I will show you one who is on the road to a right conclusion as to the meaning of what he does—the principle of life in general." Here we have the complementary truth, "Show me a man whose actions are habitually wrong,

* Not "to judge, as we reasonably may, from their lives," as in Peters' translation.

and 'I can show you one who is likely to hold a distorted view of life."

In maintaining that right action is the only avenue to the apprehension of the principle of reason in life, Aristotle here forestalls one of the most important doctrines of the *Ethics*. It follows directly from his view that moral action is already the implicit recognition of moral truth. It is thus the antithesis of a theory with which we have recently been made familiar in some popular works, viz. that moral beliefs are the result of habits and traditions that have grown up independently of the operation of human reason, and therefore lie beyond the scope of all logical tests.* According to this view conformity to social traditions is a mode of adaptation to environment, but brings a man no nearer to the *logos* or rational meaning of life. Aristotle admits that habit and tradition are moulding influences in belief, but holds that they themselves represent the action of the social reason seeking the means of that complete self-development which is the end of man. Seeing, then, that the ideal of human development is reflected, however imperfectly, in every action which contributes to true social well-being, in acting morally the individual is preparing himself for the conscious recognition of that ideal. We shall have an opportunity of returning to this, which is indeed the central truth of the *Ethics*, at a later stage.

* See, for example, Mr. A. J. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*. The same view is applied to sociology by Mr. Benjamin Kidd in his *Social Evolution*.

§ 4. *Opinions as to the Nature of the Good.*

[I. c. v. §§ 2 foll.]

The division of life into three main types seems to have been a commonplace of semi-philosophical thought. It is traceable to the celebrated metaphor attributed to Pythagoras, who, according to his biographer, compared the world to the Olympic games, to which some came to buy and sell and make gain; others for the sake of glory and to exhibit the prowess of their body; others—by far the noblest sort—to see the country and noble works of art, and contemplate every excellence of word and deed. Aristotle, in what follows, refines upon this classification by distinguishing between the money-making and the pleasure-seeking life as varieties of the lowest form, rejecting them on different grounds; while, at the other end of the scale, he draws a suggestive distinction between the life of a good man according as his powers are called into active exercise or remain dormant.

1. In dealing with the opinion that pleasure is the end (§ 3), Aristotle is not thinking of the deeper form which it had already assumed in the school of the Cyrenaics, and which was still further deepened and dignified by the Epicureans in the succeeding age. He is thinking merely of the popular form of the opinion, which identified the end of life with sensual enjoyment. This he dismisses contemptuously as a mere reflection of the degraded habits of those who profess it. The theory in its more refined and philosophical form, he reserves for later criticism.*

* See chapter xiii. below.

2. The opinion that honour is the good (§§ 4 and 5) is treated more respectfully. One of the tests of the true end of life is that it should be something inherent in man, that it should in fact be nothing less than man's true nature or self. But honour is essentially something adventitious, belonging to a man not as a property of the soul, but as an accidental gift of his fellow-men. It is, therefore, too superficial, being, as Professor Stewart says, "not the nature and life of the person honoured, but a merely superficial and transitory reflection on him of the opinion of other people." This does not mean that honour, or the respect of others, has no important function to perform in relation to the true end. As we shall see hereafter, the highest happiness involves what is here called "assurance of one's own worth," and one of the chief factors in the development of this higher form of self-consciousness is the mutual respect and recognition of friends.*

3. The definition of honour as the sign of the possession of high qualities of character suggests the view that virtue itself is the end (§§ 6 and 7). Aristotle's criticism of this view, paradoxical as it at first seems, carries us a step deeper, and brings out two closely allied elements in his conception of happiness. (*a*) Whatever else happiness is, it is a form of consciousness. As we shall see hereafter, it is the most vivid form of consciousness in which man can partake. It can never, therefore, consist in the mere *possession* of virtue, however complete. Just as a man may

* See chapter xii.

possess all knowledge, and yet if he does not use it cannot be called truly wise, so the man whose virtue remains cloistered in his soul cannot be truly happy. (*b*) Since happiness consists in the active discharge of the soul's functions, mere *potentiality*, apart from actual realization, is not enough. Happiness, therefore, implies favourable circumstances. The opposite doctrine, viz. that the consciousness of possessing virtue is sufficient for happiness, was already taught in Aristotle's time. It became a commonplace with the Stoics in the next generation, and has found votaries in every succeeding age. So far from being a paradox, it is a mark of the sanity of Aristotle's philosophy that it avoids this exaggeration. Life with him is no abstraction from the circumstances of life. The good man who is overwhelmed by great misfortunes can indeed never be miserable. The essential nobility of his character can never be wholly obscured. Even at the crisis of his misfortunes it will "shine out." * Yet it would be a paradox to call him happy. To do so is, as Grant says, to take "the greatness of a man in misfortunes as though it were identical with his happiness," or, as Jowett still more subtly puts it, to confuse our own idea of happiness with the consciousness of it in another.

4. The force of Aristotle's criticism of the money-making life as "contrary to nature" may not at first strike the modern reader. It is common to oppose the "natural" to that which is distinctly human, as that which comes earlier and is more closely allied

* I. c. x. § 12.

to our lower or animal nature. To Aristotle, however, the nature of man is not that out of which he has developed, but that into which he is developing; not what he is at the lowest, but what he is at the highest; not what he is born as (to borrow a happy distinction), but what he is born for.* Now we already know what, according to Aristotle, man is born for. He is born for life in a city-state. And this implies two things which distinguish such a life from every other form. In the first place, it is social. The activities of which it consists are directed to common as distinguished from merely personal ends. In the second place, it has a definite form. It consists of activities directed to objects the limit of whose desirableness is fixed by their relation to the common purpose of the whole. In both these respects the money-making life is unnatural. (*a*) So far from falling in with man's true end, it distorts and degrades life, turning social activities, *e.g.* the arts of national defence, and the healing of the sick,† which should minister to fulness of social life, into mere means of private gain. (*b*) There is no limit to such a life. The money-maker goes on accumulating without limit; there is, as we say, no end to it. "Ask a great money-maker what he wants to do with his money — he never knows. He doesn't make it to do anything with it. He gets it only that he *may* get it. 'What will you

* Bosanquet's *Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 130.

† *Politics*, Bk. I. c. 9 (see Note C), which ought to be read in connexion with the present passage.

make of what you have got?' you ask. 'Well, I'll get more,' he says. Just as at cricket you get more runs. There's no use in the runs, but to get more of them than other people is the game. And there's no use in the money, but to have more of it than other people is the game." * All this comes of making that which has meaning and purpose only in connexion with a wider end, into an end in itself. Aristotle, as we shall see, has no objection to great riches in itself. It is the necessary condition of one of his highest virtues, viz. magnificence. What he objects to is the indefinite pursuit of wealth irrespective of any social end which is served by it.

§ 5. *Attributes of Happiness.*

[I. c. vii. §§ 3 foll.]

Aristotle sums up the contents of the preceding chapters by claiming for happiness that it possesses the three attributes of finality, self-sufficiency, and supreme desirableness, warning us at the same time against misunderstanding the sense in which the two last are to be taken.

(*a*) The reader might hastily assume that by self-sufficiency was meant the power of rendering a man independent of society. But this would be a mistake. Whatever else the happy life is, it must be a whole or complete life, and this we have already seen is impossible unless it is a life which is lived in society. Man is a political animal, and you might as well

* Ruskin's *Crown of Wild Olive*.

speak of making him independent of himself as of making him independent of his society or *polis*. The life which is truly good and happy is in need of nothing; not in the sense of having no conditions—this would be equivalent to having no contents—but in the sense that it alone is the complete expression of the man. It alone leaves no element in his nature unaccounted for; and therefore it alone is completely satisfying.

(*b*) Similarly, in claiming for it that it is "the most desirable thing" in the world, Aristotle wishes the reader to understand that it is not one among other things with which it may be compared. It is, as George Eliot says, that which "we would choose before everything else because our souls see it to be good," but in so choosing it we do not conceive of it as one among other goods which by being added to it might make it more desirable still. It is not one among others. It is that which includes all others. But even so we must be careful how we take it. It is not merely the sum of all other goods. It includes them, but at the same time it is more than all of them together. For happiness is a "natural" or organic thing, and the essence of things organic is that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. As the tree or animal is the expression of the soul or moving principle of life organizing and transforming the parts, so happiness is the form in which reason—the soul of human life—expresses itself in its function of limiting and organizing the elements which go to make up life. The man, therefore, who takes reason as his guide

values the elements, parts or details of life, not for themselves—this, as we have seen in the case of wealth, would be to destroy all order and limit—but for the sake of the organized life to which they contribute. On the other hand, as Professor Stewart says, the man who lives by sense and imagination becomes immersed in these details. "Life or happiness is for him a mere succession of particular experiences—an indefinite sum of good things which never satisfies him. To the external view he may seem to be 'happy,' because the material conditions or elements of happiness are separately present, but the transforming spirit is inwardly wanting.

'Er hat die Theile in seiner Hand
Fehlt leider nur das geistige Band.'

He is receptive of isolated impressions; he lives as passion directs; he does not assert personality in active functions." *

* *Op. cit.* i. p. 97.

CHAPTER III.

THE ELEMENTS OF HAPPINESS.

"Happiness consists in doing the things we were made for."
MARCUS AURELIUS.

§ 1. *Aristotle's Method. Is it Inductive or Deductive?*

[I. c. vii. §§ 9 foll.]

AT the beginning of the last chapter it was pointed out that Aristotle proceeds from criticism of current opinions to an independent analysis, from which he returns to the ordinary judgments of mankind as to the nature of happiness and the things to be looked for in it, with the view at once of verifying his own theory and enabling us the better to understand the truth which popular judgments contain. The intermediate stage of this method is that at which we should expect to find an illustration of his reiterated statement that ethics is an inductive science, proceeding from facts to principles. But instead of the marshalling of facts from which an inductive generalization as to the true grounds of happiness may be made, we seem to have a series of unsupported assertions as to the "function" of man, from which his definition is deductively arrived at. "Much as

Aristotle speaks," says Grant, "of the logic of the science, we find, when we come to examine his real procedure, how little he is influenced by his own abstract rules of method. It is plain that he has deserted his former view of the science as inductive; he now makes it depend on a general conception of the chief good, which is to be applied and developed."

We might answer this criticism by pointing out, as Professor Stewart does, that it is a mistake to draw a hard-and-fast line between deduction and induction. In the investigation of complex subjects the common method of procedure is by hypothesis and verification, *i.e.* by the statement of a general proposition "on evidence avowedly insufficient," with the view of afterwards testing it by comparison with the facts. Such a process, although involving deduction, is allowed by all logicians to be essentially inductive. Some, *e.g.* Jevons,* even maintain that it is the type of all induction. In this broad sense Aristotle's method may be said to be inductive. Taking his "data" and the conclusion from them as merely provisional, he goes on, in chap. viii. § 1, to test them in the light of the facts—in this case "the opinions that are held upon the subject."

But it is also worth pointing out that Grant's criticism rests on a confusion between scientific investigation and scientific exposition. Because a philosopher chooses to expound his subject by a preliminary statement of the general results at which

* "All inductive investigation consists in the marriage of hypothesis and experiment" (*Principles of Science*, p. 504).

by a previous process of observation and analysis he has arrived, using the "facts" rather by way of illustration, it shows rather a narrow conception of logical method to accuse him of deserting the narrow way of observation and experience for the high *a priori* road. His data are in reality careful inductions from the facts of mind on the one hand, and the actual moral judgments of mankind on the other. As a matter of convenience, Aristotle prefers here to start from them as though they were independent of a previous process of observation and analysis.

§ 2. *The Parts of the Definition. Happiness as Performance of Function.*

[I. c. vii. § 14.]

It will be convenient in this chapter to follow the order in which the various elements of Happiness are mentioned in the definition.

1. Happiness, we are told, is "the performance of function," "activity of the soul according to excellence," the manifestation of "the highest virtue in living energy." It may serve to bring out the meaning of this part of the definition if we compare it with a doctrine with which we have been made familiar in our own time, and with which it has sometimes been identified. "Blessed is he," says Carlyle, "who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life-purpose; he has found it, and will follow it. Labour is life: from the inmost heart of the worker rises his God-given Force, awakens him

to all knowledge—self-knowledge and much else—so soon as work fitly begins." *

Between this doctrine and Aristotle's there is much in common. They are both a protest against the attempt to identify happiness with any mere state of passive satisfaction, *e.g.* pleasure. To say with Carlyle that "Man's Unhappiness comes of his Greatness; it is because there is an Infinite in him which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite" (in spite of what is sometimes said of the absence of the sense of the Infinite in ancient ethics), is only to express in modern terms what Aristotle means when he says that happiness consists in an activity of the soul. They are at one, too, in denying that it is anything external to a man. When Carlyle, in the same passage, pillories the idea of happiness as an "overplus" in wages that fortune can give us, and points us instead to the "God-like that is in man, in which only has he Strength and Freedom," he repeats what Aristotle says when he denies that happiness is something that is given by chance or by the gods. But with these negative points the agreement ends. Thus nothing could be further from Aristotle's meaning than the identification of happiness with "work." To Aristotle life is more than labour, the man than the workman. True, there are some cases—Aristotle would have quoted his own—in which a man's work may be identical with the highest happiness, for it may be of such a kind as to call forth the highest faculties of the soul,

* *Past and Present*, Bk. III. c. 11 (condensed).

and be a source of true enjoyment. With the average Greek citizen, however, the case was necessarily different, seeing that his "work," so far as he had any, necessarily consisted to a large extent of the ordinary business of domestic or civic administration ; and though the exercise of the virtues concerned in these must always form a constituent element in happiness, Aristotle would have denied that they could ever be co-extensive with it. Different though the state of society which Aristotle had in view was from that with which we are familiar, there is little doubt that his ideal, implying as it does, in addition to the activities that are exercised in gaining a livelihood, the need for leisure and opportunity for the exercise of the higher faculties, is the truer one of the two. It is certainly true that under modern conditions of specialized labour, full play is denied to many of the higher human faculties, for the exercise of which we are driven to look more and more to the opportunities afforded by increase of leisure and access to the higher forms of enjoyment. It is one of the chief merits of Aristotle's definition that, though formulated in view of the aristocratic society of the Greek city, it is in harmony, *mutatis mutandis*, with the ideal which reformers have put forward as the only one which it is possible to accept for modern industrial communities.

§ 3. *Happiness and Prosperity.*

[I. c. viii. §§ 15–17 ; ix. § 7.]

2. In these sections Aristotle deals with the ever-recurring question of the relation between the internal

and the external in happiness. He has already shown * that, as essentially an exercise of faculty, happiness must rank primarily as internal good. Happiness by its very nature is something intrinsic to the soul; as we should say, it is spiritual good. It consists not in what we have, but in what we are and do. So far is it from being true that happiness depends on good fortune, that no amount of evil fortune can make a good man really unhappy, no amount of good fortune can make the bad man really happy.

But although external goods are not happiness, nor any part of happiness, yet it is characteristic of Aristotle's view that they stand in a close relation to it. The two passages which throw most light on this point are chap. viii. §§ 15 and 16: "There are many things that can be done only through the instrumentality of friends and wealth and political influence. Moreover, there are some things the absence of which casts a stain upon perfect happiness, *e.g.* birth, fine children, good looks;" and chap. ix. § 7, where "other goods" are divided into "those that are necessary as conditions of happiness, and those that are useful as aids and instruments." Taken together, these passages give us three degrees of relationship corresponding to the degree of their responsiveness to the action of mind and will.

(*a*) First, as the most remote from happiness, we have things which when they are present add a lustre to happiness, when absent cast a stain upon

* c. viii. § 2.

it, but cannot be said to be necessary to or even an element in it, *e.g.* noble ancestors, good children. (*b*) There are things that are aids to happiness, as his tools are to the workman, *e.g.* friends, wealth, public influence. They may even be said to be necessary for the complete fruition of human happiness. We shall see hereafter how friends are so in a peculiar sense, being required by the happy even more than by the unhappy. But they are not indispensable conditions. The highest form of happiness — that which we ascribe to God — is independent of them. (*c*) Finally, we have things so closely related to happiness, that, though not elements in it, they are conditions of it. To this class Aristotle would have assigned bodily health, sound intelligence, membership of a civilized community, time. These are not elements in happiness, any more than rain and earth are elements in the plant, yet they are the natural soil out of which happiness springs.

Leaving for the moment the last of the conditions here mentioned, viz. that of time, which raises difficulties of its own, the modern reader is not likely to deny that happiness depends to a large extent on favourable circumstances. It is true that the asceticism latent in Christian ethics has always been suspicious of external prosperity, and has even stigmatized it as a hindrance to the good life. The experience, however, which our own age has accumulated of the value of increased power over external nature in extending the range of man's faculties and

opening new sources of social and intellectual enjoyment, is working a rapid change. What, for instance, could be more in the spirit of Aristotle than the following passage, taken almost at random from the current teaching of Christianity upon the place of wealth and leisure as contributing to happiness? "A genius here and there may rise above these depressing conditions (*i.e.* poverty and drudgery); and though he may be a stronger man because he has risen, he may also be a harder man because he has had to go through so much. The hero is the man who rises despite his surroundings, and there will always be scope for heroic virtue; but the good man is called to make the most of his opportunities, and the greater his opportunities the fuller and richer may his personal life become. The man with many opportunities who makes the most of them is not more meritorious than the man with few opportunities who makes the most of them; but though not a more meritorious man, he is in many respects a better man—more richly endowed and more highly cultivated." *

The change here indicated contains the implicit recognition of the truth that underlies Aristotle's teaching on this head, viz. that the current distinction between internal and external, character and circumstances, is a fallacious one. "Circumstances" are the medium in which will and character (in the exercise of which happiness consists) realize themselves, and are no more capable of being separated from them than space and matter are from the laws

* The Rev. Dr. Cunningham, *Use and Abuse of Money*, p. 41.

of nature which express themselves through them, or than the non-ego or object is from the subject or ego, which manifests itself in it. The question is not whether external circumstances are necessary to happiness or not, but in what degree of connexion any particular class of circumstances stands to happiness. This, as Aristotle's classification suggests, depends upon the degree in which they can be made to respond to the action of will and character; in other words, to the degree of their adaptability to moral ends.

§ 4. *Time as an Element in Happiness.*

[I. c. vii. § 16; ix. § 10; x. § 15.]

3. What Aristotle says about length of days as a condition of happiness is apt to cause a difficulty, as it might seem to be in contradiction to the general spirit of the definition. If happiness consists in performance of function, it would seem as though it depended on the quality rather than the quantity of our days.

"How long we live, not years but actions tell." *

* Cf. Ben Jonson's

"It is not growing like a tree
In bulk, doth make man better be,
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall at last dry, bald, and sere.
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night—
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see,
And in short measures life may perfect be."

This objection Aristotle would have admitted to a great extent. Mere length of days, with their prolonged enjoyments, was no essential element in his conception any more than it was in that of the educated Greek world generally.* In this spirit he elsewhere recognizes that a right-minded man will prefer one great and glorious deed to many ordinary ones (IX. viii. 9).

To understand why, notwithstanding, he lays so much stress on "a full term of years," we must take this part of the definition along with what is said in chap. ix. Aristotle is there protesting against the idea that happiness may be a gift of fortune—a protest not less necessary then in view of the suggestion of something supernatural, *i.e.* accidental, conveyed in the etymology of *eudaemonia*, than now in view of a similar suggestion of "hap" or chance. His argument is that to conceive of happiness in this way is at once to narrow its possession, and to detract from its dignity. Happiness is not a gift of the gods; if it were we should have to think of it as something uncovenanted and exceptional, not as something attainable by man as man, and in this sense universal. Moreover, such a view is inconsistent with the ordered completeness of the happy life, which can only be the result of some steady principle of causation, such as we find in the sustained endeavour of communities of men.†

* See the well-known story in Herodotus, i. 30, 31, where no emphasis is laid on the duration of happiness.

† See Professor Stewart's paraphrase of chap. ix., *op. cit.* i. p. 131.

Now the steady principle upon which our chief reliance must be placed, is, of course, education, and this requires *time*. The difficulty, therefore, is solved by noting that when he insists that "as one swallow or one warm day does not make Spring, so a single day or a short time of happiness does not make a man blessed or happy," Aristotle is thinking of time as necessary, not for the full enjoyment of happiness, but for the full development of the powers and capacities in the exercise of which it consists.

§ 5. *The Happiness of Children.*

[I. c. ix. § 10.]

This explains what to the modern reader will appear perhaps the chief paradox of these sections —the statement in chap. ix. § 10, that happiness is not for children. "If children cannot be happy," we are apt to ask, "who can?" We are sometimes even inclined to go to the opposite extreme, and to attribute to them a happiness higher both in degree and kind than falls to ourselves;* a view to which educational theory has not been slow to respond.

It is in this spirit that some modern writers have besought us to think less of the man and more of the child in what we call "preparation for life." "What

* This was Shelley's view:

> "Blest in death and life beyond man's guessing,
> Little children live and die possessed
> Still of grace that keeps them past expressing
> Blest."

must we think," cries Rousseau, the representative here as elsewhere of leading modern tendencies, "of that barbarous education which sacrifices the present for an uncertain future, which loads a child with chains of every sort, and begins by making him miserable, in order to prepare for him long in advance some pretended happiness which it is probable he will never enjoy? . . . Love childhood, encourage its sports, its pleasures, its amiable instincts. Humanity has its place in the order of things, and infancy has its place in the order of human life. We must consider the man in the man, and the child in the child." *

To ask these questions and emphasize this opposition between the child and the man merely shows how far we have drifted from Aristotle's conception. It is to overlook the fundamental distinction between freedom from responsibility and the heightened power of animal enjoyment that goes along with it and the higher human happiness that comes of the harmonious exercise of developed faculties. However gay and light-hearted a child's life may be, it is a misnomer to call it happy, except and in so far as the activities of which it consists foreshadow the life of manly purposes for which it is a preparation. Rousseau's protest had, of course, its value at the time as a criticism of the artificial and ascetic ideals of education then in vogue. It is still more valid perhaps to-day against the system of education or no education which, in spite of recent improvements, permits so large a

* *Émile*, Bk. II. See Payne's abridgment, p. 44.

sacrifice in field and factory of the life and happiness appropriate to children. But what it is important to notice is, that besides the wrong to the child, there is the deeper wrong to the man. The "barbarousness" consists in losing hold, not so much of the ideal of the child, as of the ideal of the man. By our treatment of the child we leave so stunted a stalk that no healthy growth of happiness can be expected from it. For the rest, as the child is father of the man, the child's happiness, to be true, must be father of the man's. There is really no inconsistency here. The truest child-enjoyments are those which prepare for the enjoyments of manhood. What is wanted is not the vulgar conception of happiness as the gratification of the senses "made down" to children, but an enlarged conception of what we mean by the happiness of a man, and the preparation that is required for it.

§ 6. *The Stability of Happiness.*

[I. c. x. §§ 1–11.]

4. The sections in which Aristotle discusses the stability and permanence of happiness are apt to strike us as somewhat unreal and even trivial. It is difficult to recognize in the problem as here formulated, what Professor Stewart calls "the most pressing question the moralist has to do with." For, after all, we are not very likely, as we have seen, to confuse happiness with good fortune, or to found a general argument against the possibility of happiness upon the

proverbial fickleness of fortune. Yet there is a deeper form of pessimism, which has been made familiar to us in modern times, and of which we may take the present passage without unwarrantable straining as a criticism. This begins in admitting with Aristotle that happiness does not consist in external goods, but in an inward state which is the result of harmonious activities. It denies, however, that any such state is truly attained except momentarily. Happiness must satisfy desire—is the satisfaction of desire—but desire is from its very nature insatiable. One appetite is no sooner satisfied than another makes itself felt. Consciousness, in fact, consists in the passage of the soul from one form of unrest to another. So long as consciousness lasts, the settled state of peace required by our conception of happiness is, from the nature of the case, unattainable. In the unconsciousness of death alone there is rest and completeness. For a deeper reason than Solon's the modern pessimist can repeat his maxim, "Call no man happy till his death." *

Now, if we admit the assumptions that underlie this argument, viz. that man is essentially a bundle of desires, and that happiness consists in the feeling of rest which accompanies their satisfaction, it will be difficult to avoid the conclusion that happiness is essentially unstable, and therefore unattainable. The student, however, who has followed with conviction the line of Aristotle's thought in these sections will be prepared to see the fallacy that is here involved. Man, we have agreed, is not definable as a bundle of

* Cp. Hobbes, quoted p. 13 above.

desires, nor his happiness as the feeling of pleasure incident to their satisfaction. His life, we have seen, is a system of rational activities—a system which is foreshadowed in his inherited instincts, but developed into stable elements of character by the education he receives in a civilized community. His happiness consists in finding scope for his powers in the ordered life which such a society makes possible. The man, therefore, who, as the result of education in a well-governed community, has become master of himself and all his faculties, has an abiding source of peace within himself. To such a man the recurring motives and desires of everyday life represent no disturbance of the central equilibrium or invasion of his happiness, but the means through which the potentialities of his nature are called into active exercise. It is true that desire when it is present necessarily involves pain and unrest. But it is doubtful, in the first place, whether desire in the pessimist's sense plays any large part in the normal life of the good man at all. And in the second place, even although we grant that desire in the sense of a feeling of unrest still continues to play a part in the best ordered life, it no more constitutes a disturbance of its equilibrium than the outward bend of its stalk to the stimulation of the sunshine, the downward push of its roots to the stimulation of the earth, are a disturbance of the equilibrium of the plant. And the reason is that the lifelong habits of thinking and acting upon which this equilibrium rests are nothing less than the man himself. They are what we mean by his character or personality. The happiness,

therefore, that consists in its exercise is as abiding as this is. Nothing can unsettle it which does not unsettle *him*, and though we shall not call one who suffers the fate of a Priam or a Lear happy, yet if he still retains command of *himself* he can never be miserable. So far, therefore, from being the most unstable of a man's possessions, as the pessimist holds, happiness is the stablest. It is stabler even than knowledge and science. A man may forget what he once knew, but so long as life and personality hold together he cannot, except momentarily, forget himself; and to remember one's self in this sense is to be happy.*

* See Note E.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOUL AND ITS PARTS.

"Let us not always say,
Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole.
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us say all good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more
Now than flesh helps soul."

BROWNING.

§ 1. *Aristotle's Doctrine of the Relation between Soul and Body.*

[I. c. xiii.]

THE meaning of our definition of Happiness hinges upon the sense in which we take the term Virtue or Excellence. The sections before us establish three general positions: (*a*) it is excellence of the soul; (*b*) it is excellence of the rational part of the soul; (*c*) of this excellence there are two forms—a lower or moral, and a higher or intellectual. It is thus natural that the emphasis throughout should be laid upon the distinctions on which these positions depend, viz. that between (*a*) body and soul; (*b*) the irrational and the rational soul; (*c*) the moral and the intellectual in the human soul, rather than upon the

unity that underlies them. With other fuller statements of the sense in which these distinctions—and especially (*a*) and (*b*)—are to be taken, behind him (see § 9), Aristotle was the less concerned to dwell upon the latter question here. For the English reader to whom these distinctions are apt to suggest a deeper division than that between the "convex and concave of a circle" (§ 10), a more careful statement of the relation of the "parts" of man's nature to each other may not be out of place.

Beginning with the first, and inquiring how Aristotle defines the relation between soul and body, we find the most succinct statement of it in his treatise on Psychology. "Soul," he there says, "is the simplest actuality of a natural body which has the potentiality of life." * But this explanation, to say the least of it, is not self-explanatory. What is meant by actuality and potentiality? These phrases introduce us to one of the central conceptions of Aristotle's philosophy, of which a word must be said.

Created beings are conceived of by Aristotle—in a form which the modern theory of evolution renders easily comprehensible—as a series in which each lower type is related to that which is above it, as matter to form or the potential to the actual. This relation manifests itself even in inorganic matter. We may say, for example, that marble exists potentially in the chemical materials of which it is composed. But the most striking examples are found in the field of

* *De Anima*, II. c. i. § 6. See Wallace's *Aristotle's Psychology*, p. 61.

organic life, and in the productions of human art. In the former we have a hierarchy of forms which find their final reality in the life of man, who sums up while he transcends all that went before. In the latter the means, *e.g.* the marble, stands to the end —the statue or the temple column—as the matter to the form, the potential to the actual.

Returning to Aristotle's doctrine of the soul, we find in it merely an application of this general theory. At a certain point in this series, viz. that known as the organic, or, as Aristotle calls it, "natural" body, we find matter endowed with life. But it is a mistake to conceive of these two, which popular language distinguishes as body and soul, as essentially distinct from each other. The soul is not a mysterious substance lodged in another substance called body. It stands to body as the statue to the marble, or, better still, as the active function to the organ. If, says Aristotle, we were to conceive of the axe as the body, "then its axehood, or its being an axe, would constitute its essential nature or reality, and thus, so to speak, its soul; because, were this axehood taken away from it, it would be no longer an axe. . . . If the eye were possessed of life, vision would be its soul, because vision is the reality which expresses the idea of the eye. The eye itself, on the other hand, is merely the material substratum for vision, and when this power of vision fails, it no longer remains an eye, except in so far as it is still called by the same name, just in the same way as an eye carved in stone or delineated in painting is

also so described. . . . In the same way, then, as cutting is the full realization of an axe, or actual seeing the realization of the eye, so also waking may be said to be the full realization of the body. . . . The body, on the other hand, is merely the material to which soul gives reality; and just as the eye is both the pupil and its vision, so also the living animal is at once the soul and the body in connexion."*

It is clear that we are here far beyond the popular dualism, according to which body and soul are two separate entities, temporarily related to each other in a mysterious way. It is true that Aristotle does not consistently maintain himself at the point of view here indicated. He even hints, towards the end of the same passage, that though the soul as a whole is inseparable from the body, it is yet conceivable that "some parts of it" may be separable because related to the body in a different way from the other parts, adding, "It is further matter of doubt whether soul as the perfect realization of body may not stand to it in the same separable relation as a sailor to his boat." But the view above given is the one which is the most consistent with his philosophy as a whole, and will be admitted to be far the more interesting and suggestive of the two.† Aristotle had, of course,

* *De An.* II. c. i. §§ 8 foll. (Wallace's tr., p. 63; cp. his introd., p. xlv.).

† Grant's remark (*op. cit.* i. p. 296)—"As long as the soul is described as bearing the relation to the body of sight to the eye, of a flower to the seed, of the impression to the wax, we may be content to consider this a piece of ancient physical philosophy. Our interest is different [he means: more justly claimed] when the soul is said to be related to the body 'as a sailor to his boat'"—seems just the reverse of the truth.

no notion of the structure of the nervous system and the close connexion which modern physiology has established between mental operations and cerebral changes, but he here anticipates the results forced upon us by these facts, which make the crude dualism of popular opinion no longer tenable. As he himself says, "The definition we have just given should make it evident that we must no more ask whether the soul and the body are one than ask whether the wax and the figure impressed upon it are one, or generally inquire whether the material and that of which it is the material are one." *

On this ground he rejects the doctrine of the Pythagoreans that the same soul may inhabit different bodies, as inconsistent with its individuality. If we suppose that the body exists as the tool or instrument of the soul, to say that the same soul may equally well inhabit several bodies is as much as to say that a carpenter may serve himself in his trade equally with a flute or with an axe.

The theory here stated, by making soul completely dependent on body, might seem at first sight to approximate to the materialistic hypothesis. It is true that Aristotle avoids the cruder form of materialism which simply identifies body and soul by describing the latter as the "function" or "realization" of the body. But it is doubtful whether this of itself would save him; for the function of a body, *e.g.* of a muscle, may be said after all to be nothing more than the body itself in a particular condition or in the execution

* *De An.* II. c. i. § 7 (Wallace's tr., p. 61).

of particular movements.* The truth is, however, that function or realization, in Aristotle's language, is far more than a mere condition or mode of motion. The function is that which gives form to the body, being the end or purpose for which the body exists. True, the body must be there before the function can be performed ; a particular organ must be developed before it can be used. But it is a mistake to say that the organ is the cause of the function. The truth, in fact, is just the contrary. The function is the cause of the organ. This is true even in the physiological sense that the organ is developed under the stress of the need to perform the act. It is still truer in the philosophical sense that we only understand the organ when we take it in connexion with the function it performs. All this is well brought out by Aristotle himself, who criticizes Anaxagoras for saying that man is intelligent because he has hands. This is the reverse, or at least only one side of the truth. It would be truer to say that man has hands because he is intelligent ; "for the instrument must be fitted to its work, not the work to the instrument." † Aristotle is thus as far as possible removed from the point of view of modern materialism, which asserts that mind can only be known through a study of the material processes which accompany it. So far is this from being true that we can only understand the physiological phenomena in the light of the psychical, which give them meaning and value.

* See Höffding, *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 60.

† *Part. An.* IV. 10. See Zeller's *Aristotle*, ii. p. 11.

If there are still readers who fear that in thus emphasizing the relation of soul to body we are detracting from the spirituality of life, we may be permitted to suspect that they have failed to grasp the distinction, so vital to all clear thinking, between the value and the origin of a thing—what a thing is in itself, and the materials or the natural processes which are its conditions. A flower is not less a flower because of the earth out of which it springs, or a statue a statue because it is resolvable into carbonate of lime. The glory of the flower and of the statue is that their materials have been transfigured in the making of them, as it is the glory of these materials to be so transfigured. Similarly, it is the glory of the soul to have moulded and transfigured the body, just as it is the glory of the body to have been moulded and transfigured by the soul.*

§ 2. *The "Parts" of the Soul.*

[I. c. xiii. §§ 10 foll.]

The philosophical principle of form and matter, which is applied to explain the relation of soul and body, shows us also in what sense the Aristotelian division between the "parts" of the soul as we have it in these sections must be taken. We have already seen that Aristotle conceives of nature as revealing herself in a progressive series of forms, beginning with the lower and inorganic, and rising finally to the life of conscious reason. While nature thus presents us

* Cf. Bosanquet's *Psychology of the Moral Self*, pp. 124, 125.

with a continuous series of graduated forms, each of which stands to that above it as matter to form, means to end, yet at certain points we meet with clearly marked divisions corresponding to popular distinctions. Confining ourselves to organic life, we have first the merely *vegetative* life of plants, with their two main properties of growth and propagation. Above this we have the *animal* forms, endowed in addition to these with the properties of sensation, pain and pleasure, appetite, to which we must add in the case of some of the higher animals a large gift of intelligence, and the rudiments of moral character. Finally, in the *rational* soul of man, which is the crown of all that goes before, we have the attribute of reason displaying itself not only in a higher degree of intelligence, but in the faculty of apprehending the supersensible and entering into the meaning of the whole.*

As separate stages of organic development, and again, as separate elements in human nature, it is clear enough what we are to understand by these different "souls." But it is not so plain how we are to conceive of their union in individual organisms. A reference, however, to what Aristotle elsewhere says, leaves us in no doubt as to his own view on this subject. Thus, in criticizing Plato's threefold division of the soul into reason, passion, and desire, Aristotle points out that it commits the mistake of splitting up the soul into parts, and forces us to assume, contrary to fact, that each has a specific organ in the body. The

* Zeller, *op. cit.* ii. p. 21 foll.

connexion is much more intimate than Plato held, and is compared by Aristotle to the relation of a more complex geometrical figure to a simpler. Just as a quadrangle contains in itself two triangles, but cannot be said to be compacted of them, so the individual animal consists of the union of the vegetative and the appetitive soul. And just as there is no figure which is not some power of the triangle, so there is no soul, however exalted in the scale, which does not contain the lower. But Aristotle would have been the first to admit that no geometrical metaphor is adequate to express the real depth of the connexion. The higher not only contains the lower, but transforms it, so that it is only in the new setting which it receives as an element in the higher that the potentialities of the lower become apparent.* Thus in the life of sensation and desire we have the life of nutrition raised to a higher power, and showing us what it had in it to become. Similarly, in the life of thought and volition we see for the first time the true end and purpose of sense, feeling, and appetite.

Applying this to the division before us: when Aristotle tells us that the soul of man consists of three parts—a vegetative or purely irrational, a sensitive or appetitive, which is partly rational and partly irrational, and a purely rational—we are prepared to understand in what sense these expressions must be taken.

* The most suggestive of Aristotle's formulæ for expressing the relation of form to matter is that by which he describes the form as "that which the matter was all along" (*τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι*).

1. In the first place there can here be nothing purely irrational in the sense that it is not adapted to the end of the whole. The physical and merely vegetative part of man already bears the stamp of his reason. There is even, as Professor Stewart points out, a sense in which it is the conscious product of reason. It is true that as conscious individuals we have little to do with the form and physical growth of our bodies. But it is not true that the body has reached its present stage of development independently of the action of conscious purpose. Apart altogether from sexual selection, where the purpose may be said to be unconscious, we have the conscious reason of the community, acting *inter alia* through prescribed forms of physical education, and sensibly modifying the inherited structure of the physical organism.

2. It is all the more important to try to define accurately what is implied in the general philosophy sketched above as to the relation between reason and desire, that Aristotle's own expressions in the passage before us are not carefully selected. Thus in §§ 15 and 18, he does not hesitate to class desire as "irrational," while his metaphor in §§ 15 and 16 of the paralytic limb does not mend matters, but, as Grant remarks, is apt to suggest the parallel passage in the Epistle to the Romans, where St. Paul describes the opposition between the "law of my mind," and "the law in my members." The reader who has followed the above account of Aristotle's guiding conception will have no difficulty in seeing how wholly contrary to the spirit of his doctrine any such

interpretation would be. On the one hand, the "law in the members" is not something essentially different from "the law of the mind"—desire from reason. According to Aristotle there is a natural tendency in the desires and impulses to fall into an order or system which more or less reflects the order required by the social environment.* On the other hand, the life of reason does not mean the uprooting of the animal desires, but the subordination of them to the human purposes which they themselves already foreshadow It is true, indeed, that in the man of imperfect self-control there does appear to be such a division as is here suggested. But this is because he represents the stage of transition from the lower stage at which, as in the intelligent animal or docile child, the harmony between reason and passion is merely implicit, to the higher in which, as in the man of perfected self-control, it has become the conscious principle of life. When the transition has been made we find that the higher harmony has been obtained, not at the expense of the lower or animal nature by suppressing or maiming it, but by developing the rational principle it foreshadows and reproducing on the higher plane of conscious life the completeness which the unconscious possesses on a lower.

§ 3. *Moral and Intellectual Virtue.*

[I. c. xiii. § 19.]

If we apply the same principle to the different forms of virtue or capacity with which these sections

* See p. 70.

end, we shall see how little support the ordinary dualism between morality and intelligence, practice and theory, receives from the Aristotelian division.

(*a*) On the broad distinction between the morally good life, manifesting itself in such "virtues" as self-mastery and liberality, and the life of intellectual insight as typified in the wise administration of one's own and other people's affairs, Aristotle, as we shall see, shows no tendency to suppose that a man can be good in the full sense without being intelligent and thoughtful. The life of prudence he consistently conceives of (as we should expect from his general view of the relation of higher forms of reality to lower) as the end to which the life of conformity to moral and social traditions points, and in which it finds its reality. According to this view, to be good is to be on the road to wisdom; to be wise is to know where goodness points and what it means.

(*b*) It is true that in his conception of the relation between the lower and the higher form of the "intellectual" life (prudence or practical wisdom, and thought or philosophy) Aristotle leaves us in some uncertainty, and that there are passages where he seems to have in view as the highest development of human capacity a life only negatively related to the active duties of citizenship. Whatever difficulties this uncertainty may cause in dealing with the text, from the side of Aristotle's philosophical principles there is no justification for any such dualism between the life of the practical man and of the thinker. According to these principles, the purpose of thought and reflection

is not to remove us from practice, but to raise practice to a higher plane. To separate thought from action is as fatal to a true understanding, not only of the spirit of the Aristotelian philosophy, but of life, as to separate soul from body, form from content. Separated from the life of action, the life of reflection becomes unreal; separated from reflection, the life of action becomes unmeaning. As Professor Mackenzie puts it in his pointed treatment of this subject: "A life of pure reflection would never acquire any positive content. It would have principles, but no facts to apply them to; yet it is by contact with such facts that the principles themselves grow. It is experience that tests them and sends us back again to improve them." * On the other hand, the life of action without reflection, bringing our actual achievements face to face with the ideal of excellence which is their end, is necessarily stereotyped and unprogressive. It is not, therefore, merely a case of action and reaction: it is not merely that "in retirement we criticize the acts of life; in life we criticize the ideas of retirement," or that "action is the gymnastics, reflection the music, of moral culture." † The life of action is the body and blood of the life of thought; the life of thought is the soul and reason of the life of action.

* *Manual of Ethics*, 3rd edit. p. 364.

† *Ibid.* p. 366.

CHAPTER V.

THE GENERAL NATURE OF VIRTUE.

"I say, then, that pleasure and pain are the first perceptions of children, and that these are the forms in which virtue and vice first appear in the soul. . . . By education, I mean the training that is given by suitable habits to the first instincts of virtue in children, when pleasure and affection, pain and hatred, are rightly implanted in souls not yet able to understand their meaning, and who, when they attain to Reason, find that they are in harmony with her."

PLATO.

§ 1. *The Roots of Virtue.*

[II. c. i. § 3.]

THE account given in the last chapter of the relation of the lower to the higher elements in man—"nature" to "spirit"—has prepared us to hear that virtue has its roots in natural human instincts. It is true that good action does not come by nature, in the sense of being an inheritable consequence of primitive tendencies. Yet it is not contrary to nature. We have even a natural capacity for acquiring it. In a later passage we are told of a natural justice, a natural courage, a natural modesty and self-control.*

* See *Ethics*, VI. c. xiii. § 1 (p. 274 below); with which we may compare *Magna Moralia*, I. § 5: "We are all endowed with certain natural virtues, of which the unreasoning impulse to obey the dictates of courage and justice is an example." See also Note A, *fin.*

As the feelings are the potentiality of thought,* so the instincts may be said to be the potentiality or capacity of virtue. And just as the training of the feelings may be said to be the process of developing a blind emotion into a rational sentiment, so moral education may be said to be the transformation of the blind gropings of natural instinct into the conscious choice of what is right and good.

It need hardly be pointed out that all this is in essential harmony with the more scientific view of human instincts of our own time and the theory of education founded upon it. Darwin's treatment of the natural basis of morality in the *Descent of Man*† might be taken as a comment upon the passage before us. "As a man is a social animal, it is also probable that he would inherit a tendency to be faithful to his comrades, for this quality is common to most social animals. He would in like manner possess some capacity for self-command and perhaps of obedience to the leader of the community. He would from an inherited tendency still be willing to defend in concert with others his fellow-men, and would be ready to aid them in any way which does not too greatly interfere with his own welfare or his strong desires."

The modern educational theories derived from this view contrast strongly with those which have their source in the older doctrine of "original sin," or its modern equivalent in the writings of those who, like Mr. Benjamin Kidd, regard man as

* Aristotle calls them "materialized thoughts."

† Pt. I. c. iii.

essentially unsocial. So far from regarding instincts and passions as a noxious undergrowth which has to be removed before anything better can be implanted, scientific theory sees in them the germ and promise of moral capacity. It is a proof of the wholesome influence which Aristotle's teaching exercised on subsequent educational theory, that his followers of the Peripatetic school clearly saw that the mistaken attempt of the Ascetics to uproot the natural instincts must issue in leaving the rational part of the soul with nothing to carry it forward to the ends of reason, nor even to give it even steerage way, "like a pilot when the wind has dropped." *

There are, however, two features of the actions we class as instinctive which mark them off from those that are good or virtuous. (*a*) They are fitful and capricious. Thus the unreasoning impulse to face danger may at the critical moment be replaced by an equally unreasoning impulse towards self-preservation.† They therefore require to be rendered stable by being attached to some permanent object of human interest. A man's natural courage may in this way become the basis of loyalty to his comrade in arms, his regiment or his country; his natural modesty the basis of self-respect. What was before an instinct may thus be developed into a moral sentiment.

* Plutarch, *de Virtute Morali*, 12 (quoted by Stewart).

† An interesting example is afforded by Stephen Crane's psychological tale, *The Red Badge of Courage*. On the first day of the battle the hero, who is a raw recruit, to his own astonishment fights like the best. On the second day, equally to his astonishment, he incontinently runs away. He has only natural courage.

(*b*) They are done in unconsciousness of the end or purpose they are fitted to effect. There is thus no principle acknowledged in them which can set a limit to them, and "just as," to use Aristotle's metaphor, "strong bodies when they move blindly fall heavily through not having the use of their eyes, so natural virtue is apt to come to grief." The remedy here is to furnish the instinct with an eye; in other words, to train it to act in strict subordination to a conception of social welfare more or less consciously grasped, and thus to take its place in the organized life of the good citizen.

If we ask how, as a matter of fact, this transformation of the natural virtues takes place, the following sections give the answer.

§ 2. *Training in Virtue.*

[II. c. i. §§ 6–8; c. ii. §§ 6–9.]

The transforming power is here the force of habit. It is by doing the action which is just, courageous, etc., that stability is given to fitful, natural instinct. It is by omitting to do it, or doing what is actually wrong, that the instinct is distorted and moral growth checked. It is by training in good habit also that at a later stage moral insight is developed. The former process is that with which we are in the mean time concerned.

We need hardly dwell on this side of moral training. Aristotle is led to emphasize the truth that virtue is habit by the comparative neglect of it in some

of the ethical theories of his time. It is true, as we shall see hereafter, that the attempt to define morality in terms of habit has difficulties of its own which call for further explanation. Here, however, it is sufficient to note that all that modern psychology teaches as to the nature of habit has only brought home to us more convincingly the vital connexion that exists between what we *do* to-day and what we shall *be* to-morrow. To quote only a single passage from Professor James, who in his classical chapter on Habit gives us the modern version of the Aristotelian doctrine: "We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every stroke of virtue or of vice leaves its never so little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle in Jefferson's play excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, 'I won't count this time!' Well, he may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is being counted none the less. Down among the nerve-cells and fibres, the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up, to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is in strict literalness wiped out." *

On the side of the failure to develop desirable instincts and habits, modern psychology is no less insistent. Thus, Professor James, dwelling on the part that instinct plays as the basis of man's moral and intellectual life, and lamenting its neglect in education, emphasizes the necessity of seizing the psychological moment for the development of it

* *Principles of Psychology*, i. p. 127.

by exercise.* Similarly, in respect to habit he notes that *continuity* of training is the great means of giving the right bent to character, or, as he puts it, making "our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy." In this he has the support of Professor Bain, who, in a passage which he quotes, points out that "the peculiarity of the moral habits, contradistinguishing them from the intellectual acquisitions, is the presence of two hostile powers, one to be gradually raised into the ascendant over the other. It is necessary above all things in such a situation never to lose a battle. Every gain on the wrong side undoes the effect of many conquests on the right. The essential precaution, therefore, is so to regulate the two opposing powers that the one may have a series of uninterrupted successes until repetition has fortified it to such a degree as to enable it to cope with the opposition under any circumstances. This is the theoretically best career of moral progress." †

§ 3. *The Test of Virtue.*

[II. c. iii. § 1.]

The test that Aristotle proposes of the completely good act, viz. the pleasure that attends it, suggests several difficulties. Is it, say, applicable to courage? Must we withhold approval from the courageous man who faces wounds and death on the battle-field unless he does so not only without pain but with

* *Op. cit.* ii. pp. 401 and 441.

† *Ibid.* p. 123. Cf. Bain's *The Emotions and the Will*, p. 440.

exhilaration and joy? If not, we have the paradox that the better and happier a man is the more painful the act is likely to be, since he has the more to lose. This difficulty is met partly by pointing out that the virtue of courage is itself defined as a certain attitude of mind in the presence of pain or the prospect of pain, and that by hypothesis it involves more or less of pain; partly by noting that even here the more disciplined the character, the more transient the pain and the greater the room for the exultation and *élan* which we associate with the heroic act.* But perhaps the chief difficulty which occurs to the modern reader is not that of applying the test in special cases, such as courage, but of applying it at all. The doctrine seems to contradict a commonly received idea that the greater the effort required for a good action, the greater the virtue shown in performing it, and that so far is it from being true that the readiness and ease with which an action is performed are the test of its moral quality, that only those actions are truly good which are done contrary to inclination merely because they are right.

The difficulty here, which we may admit is a real one, is met by making a distinction which throws further light on Aristotle's doctrine—the distinction, namely, between the *virtue* or excellence that is shown in the actions of the fully developed character, and the *merit* or credit which we attribute to the actions of the man whose character is still, so to speak, in the gristle. It is quite true that the action of the man

* See III. ix. 2 foll. (p. 256).

of strong undisciplined desires who succeeds in doing what is right in spite of temptation, affects us in a different way from that of the man who does it with the ease and certainty of habit. We mark this difference by speaking of the former as more meritorious. But it would be a mistake to maintain that it is a better action. On the contrary, if it is the mark of a good act to be the outcome of a good character, we must maintain that the better the character the better the action. A closer view of the act itself will probably convince us that this is so. For, in the first place, the very ease with which it is performed gives it a grace and finish that the other wants. Pleasure, according to Aristotle, is not merely the sign of perfection; it is the cause of it.* But, in the second place, the man who does his duty "because he likes to," escapes a danger to which the other is exposed. Such a man takes his good actions like the events of nature, as something to be expected. They are "all in the day's work." It does not, therefore, strike him to approve them.† They are accordingly the less likely to be marred by any feeling of self-complacency. To have won a victory over one's self may naturally enough be a cause of self-congratulation. But it is also humiliating enough, when we come to think of it, to have had to win a victory over one's self at all.

* See chapter xiii. p. 201.

† Mr. Leslie Stephen says somewhere that after forty a man has no right to have a conscience. This applies to the approval as well as to the disapproval of conscience.

§ 4. *Character and Action.*

[II. c. iv. §§ 1–3.]

Chapter iv. opens with the statement of an objection to the theory of habit as just explained. Seeing that good action presupposes good habit, how can the latter have its origin in the former? The sections in which Aristotle states his reply are not without obscurity, owing to a certain confusion in the thought. In § 2 it is pointed out that the objection rests on a failure to distinguish acts which are formally or accidentally right, from those which as the outcome of good character are right in the full sense. The second part (§ 3) is a criticism of the popular analogy between art and morality, and the obscurity comes from the looseness of the relation in which this criticism stands to the rest of the argument. Not only does it throw no further light on the difficulty with which the chapter opens, but it introduces a new difficulty, viz. that of the relation between virtue and knowledge, which is here only partially met.

Apart, however, from the bearing of these sections on the particular objection to which they are intended to furnish the reply, they are interesting as throwing light upon Aristotle's views on two questions which naturally rise in connexion with the present discussion: (*a*) What is the relation between the goodness of an act and the motive of it? (*b*) What is the true relation between art and morality?

(*a*) The objection itself, suggested in c. iv. § 1, is

perhaps not one that would naturally have suggested itself to a modern reader. It seems quite natural to us to separate off action on the one hand from character and motive on the other, and we find no difficulty in speaking of actions as good independently of the will that they express. It is even characteristic of the current utilitarian view to justify this distinction on the ground that an action is right and good because it "produces happiness," not because it is the act of a good man.* And indeed it is difficult to see how, if we grant the utilitarian contention that the end or good is something different from virtue or goodness, and that the good action is valuable only in so far as it tends to produce pleasure or happiness, the good character only in so far as it tends to produce good actions, this conclusion can be avoided. There is in this case no organic connexion between good character or virtue and the end for which it exists, and an action may be in the fullest sense good whatever the character of the man who does it.

Now, it is true that the contrast in Aristotle's mind is not the modern one between motive and consequence, but between action which is the result, say, of obedience to a command, and action which is the outcome of a fully developed character. Yet the statement of the objection and the reply to it have a deeper interest for us on account of the complete reversal of the current distinction which they imply. According to Aristotle's view we must deny goodness of action, however good may be its consequences,

* See Mill's *Utilitarianism*, chap. ii. p. 26.

unless it is the spontaneous expression of good character and motive. To take Mill's example, the saving of the life of a fellow-creature, if it is done from a wrong motive, *e.g.* to win the medal of the Royal Humane Society, could only be called good "accidentally." To be a truly good action it must be done from no selfish motive, but simply because it is the right thing to do: because, being the man he is, the doer of it "cannot do otherwise."

If it be said that it is contrary to common sense to deny goodness of an action which is right (in itself) inasmuch as it produces consequences which are good quite independently of the will that is expressed in it, the reply is that this depends on the answer we give to two questions. (1) What *are* the consequences at which the act which is good aims? (2) Can these consequences really be attained if the motive is bad? In reply to the first question, Aristotle would have maintained that "good" consequences are not to be measured by the amount of pleasure to one's self and others that the action produces. The production of pleasure taken by itself is neither good nor evil from the point of view of morality. "Good" consequences in the moral sense can only mean those that make for the increase of happiness in the sense of the exercise of virtue or excellence, and this, as we have just seen, is a matter of *character*. It is perhaps difficult to say what an ancient Greek philosopher would have replied to so essentially modern a question as the second of the above. It is not, however, difficult to see that the answer that has been given to it by

one of his most distinguished modern followers is in essential accordance with Aristotle's principles. Discussing the question whether actions which are the expression of a bad or imperfect character can really have good consequences of the kind just described, Green says: "It is only to our limited vision that there can seem to be such a thing as good effects from an action that is bad in respect of the will which it represents, and that in consequence the question becomes possible whether the morality of an action is determined by its motive or by its consequences. There is no real reason to doubt that the good or evil in the motive of an action is exactly measured by the good or evil of its consequences as rightly estimated—estimated, that is, in their bearing on the production of a good will or the perfecting of mankind." [Thus to use Green's own instance: "The good in the effect of a political movement will correspond to the degree of good will which has been exerted in bringing it about; and the effects of any selfishness in its promoters will appear in some limitation to the good it brings society."] "The contrary only appears to be the case on account of the limited view we take both of action and consequences." *

§ 5. *Art and Morality.*

[II. c. iv. § 3.]

(*b*) The organic connexion which in Aristotle's view exists between action and character is further

* *Prolegomena to Ethics*, § 295.

illustrated by what is said in chapter iv. § 3 on the relation between art and morality.

It is a common view that the distinction between art and morality, the beautiful and the good, is overlooked by Greek ethics in general, and by Aristotle in particular. The impression is founded partly on the identity of their artistic and ethical terminology (as Ruskin says, "There is scarcely a word in Greek social philosophy which has not a reference to musical law, and scarcely a word in Greek musical science which has not an understood reference to social law"); partly on the care with which the great ethical writers themselves work out the conception of the good life, as consisting essentially in harmony or proportion between the different elements of human nature. It is strengthened in the case of Aristotle by frequent reference (*e.g.* I. c. vii. § 9 foll.) to the analogy between the function of man as man and the craft of the artist, by his picture of the happy man (*e.g.* I. c. viii. § 15) as an actor duly equipped with all the stage properties necessary for the part he has to play in life, but most of all by his definition of virtue as a mean and his conception of the good act as not only one that is harmonious in all its parts, but as one that is done for the sake of its harmony or beauty.

How far this criticism is from the truth in respect to happiness in general, we have already seen. Happiness is no artificial product, but the full development of the true nature of man. As Professor Stewart puts it: "Since the subject of ethics is the life of man at its best (the 'good life'), it is easy to

understand that the relation of 'nature,' rather than that of 'art,' to the Good, will be present in Aristotle's mind throughout the treatise. Human life at its best is no mere device or means adopted by man for the sake of something beyond itself, or better. The 'happy man' *lives*, and there is nothing better than his life. His nature is a 'proportion' or organism, 'right' balanced in all its parts and containing, like the nature of a tree, its own 'principle' and 'end' within itself—freely initiating functions, in the performance of which it treats itself 'always as an end, and never merely as a means.'" *

With regard to moral goodness, the present passage indicates two points in which the "analogy of the arts is misleading."

(1) In the case of art, the work itself, the "effect," is the important matter: "Hermes is dug up at Olympia, and we find him beautiful as soon as we see him" (Stewart); the character of the artist, or the state of his mind in the execution of it, is quite secondary and does not enter into our ordinary æsthetic judgments at all. In the case of conduct, on the contrary, goodness or badness depends, as we have seen, on the character or habit of will of which it is the expression. However good an action appears from the point of view of its results, unless the attitude of will in the doer of it be right, nothing is right. On the other hand, however ineffective the action appears to be, if only the will be good, all is well. We say "appears," for we have already seen with respect to consequences apparently

* *Op. cit.* ii. p. 4.

good that a deeper insight into the true nature of the consequences would probably show that imperfection of character is faithfully reflected in the imperfection of the results. Extending the same principle to the failure to produce a desired effect, here also it is probably true that, given the good will (and by good will we mean not only "good intentions," but readiness to spare no trouble to discover and secure the proper means to secure our ends), failure to produce the desired effect is only apparent. From this point of view, we can conceive an Intelligence to which it would be sufficient that actions should have a certain quality of their own, and the distinction in this respect between art and morality would have disappeared. But this does not alter the truth of Aristotle's remark so far as our limited human judgments are concerned. To us it is true that the material with which the artist works responds to his conceptions of beauty with a directness which we look for in vain in the responses of so complicated a material as the circumstances of social life. The consequence is, that while the result comes home to us immediately in the former case as good or bad, our judgments on the latter are given with hesitation and reserve.

(2) Secondly, art differs from conduct in that while "knowledge" is an essential condition of good work in the former, for the latter "knowledge is of comparatively little importance." It may be well to notice, in view of the doctrine which we have already to some extent anticipated, and which is subsequently more fully developed, in what sense Aristotle intends us to take

this distinction. There is a sense in which it is neither true that knowledge is of supreme importance in art, nor that it is of comparatively little importance in morals. The artist knows well enough, and it is a truth that we are coming more and more clearly to recognize,* that technical knowledge of the principles of an art apart from the practice of actual production will carry him but a little way. On the other hand, just as the best results are obtained from the artist or artisan who not only possesses the dexterity that comes of practice but understands the principles that underlie the great traditions of his craft, so the best "effects" are obtained in conduct (as no one recognizes more fully than Aristotle himself) when a man rises to the consciousness of the meaning and purpose of the moral habits in which he has been trained. The point of view, however, from which Aristotle here looks at the subject, is not that of "goodness in the full sense of the word," as he afterwards calls it. He thinks of conduct in this section, as throughout the passage, in its beginnings, and from the side of education. From this point of view it is true not only that a theoretic acquaintance with the principles of right living alone can never "do the business for us"—any more than can a theoretic acquaintance with the principles of art—but that in so complicated a business as life the conscious recognition of the principles which underlie good actions is necessarily subsequent to careful training in the kind of conduct which current standards recognize as good.

* See *Life of William Morris*, by J. W. Mackail, *passim*.

A man may understand the principles of art production and make a tolerable art-critic, though he has no practical acquaintance with its material and methods. But unless he knows in his own experience, and as the result of a formed habit of will, the actual *feel* of a moral action, it is vain to try to make him understand the meaning of a moral principle. So interpreted, what Aristotle says in this section falls into line with all that has already been said of habit as the essential condition of moral growth.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF VIRTUE.

"Let us note that in every one of us there are two guiding and ruling principles which lead us whither they will; one is natural desire of pleasure, the other is an acquired opinion which is in search of the best; and these two are sometimes in harmony, and then again at war, and sometimes the one, sometimes the other, conquers. When opinion conquers, and by the help of reason leads us to the best, the conquering principle is called temperance; but when desire which is devoid of reason rules in us and drags us to pleasure, that power of misrule is called excess. But excess has many names, and many members, and many forms, and any of these forms when marked gives a name to the bearer of the name, neither honourable nor desirable."

PLATO.

§ 1. *The Mean.*

[II. c. vi. § 15.]

ARISTOTLE'S definition of Virtue is an illustration of progressive analysis, each of the terms adding something specific, and giving it further depth and precision. We may in the present chapter take each of the terms in succession, trying to suggest on the way the modern problems which rise in connexion with them.

The first part of the definition which identifies virtue with the *mean* has probably obtained a wider currency than any other philosophical formula. This makes

it all the more important to understand at the outset exactly what is meant. It is sometimes interpreted as though it meant moderation, and the doctrine identified with the world-wise philosophy of the Preacher, of Horace, and Talleyrand.* In this sense the definition in the *Ethics* has been compared with the statement in the *Politics* that the middle classes with moderate means are the happiest part of the community.†

Nothing, of course, could be further from Aristotle's meaning. Such an interpretation is in obvious contradiction with his own statement that the mean cannot be struck by a mere arithmetical process of averages, but that it is strictly relative to the individual, and still more obviously with the qualification in c. vi. § 17, that virtue is itself an extreme. Leaving the latter in the mean time, it is sufficiently clear from the analogy of the arts which is here employed that the writer has in view the limitation imposed upon the passions and desires not by average opinion and practice, but by the ideal form of individual life. As the artist works at the parts with his eye upon the whole, so it is the form of his own life as a whole that the individual must have in view in fixing the limits within which particular impulses and desires may be satisfied.

* "Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?"

"Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit tutus."

"Above all, gentlemen, let us have no zeal."

† See Macleane's Horace, n. on Odes, II. 10.

So far is clear, but this may seem from our modern point of view only to raise another difficulty. By taking the "individual" as our standard instead of the general average, we escape the ethical Scylla of identifying morality with conventional opinion—but only to fall into the Charybdis of making it a mere matter of individual taste and enjoyment. On this view, a man's life is his own; his one duty is to himself, viz. to live beautifully or at least prudently.

§ 2. *The Mean as determined by Reason.*

The answer to this difficulty is to be found in the second part of the definition, the statement of the standard in terms of *reason*. It is true that this does not at first bring conviction to the modern reader, to whom the word "reason" is apt to have merely a subjective meaning, if not also to indicate merely the insight of the individual into the conditions of his own happiness. To the Greek, however, the word has the objective significance of law or order as well. It thus introduces the conception of a standard which is the same for all. If we ask where this standard is to be sought, the answer has already been given in the metaphor of the artist. It is the "whole" of human nature, to express which in the details of conduct is the ideal of the good man, in the same sense as it is the ideal of the artist to harmonize the details of his picture to the conception of the whole.

It will perhaps help us to realize more fully what Aristotle here means, if we compare his view with that of a modern philosopher with which it is

sometimes identified. In discussing the principle or standard of moral judgment, Bishop Butler, in a passage which is in reality a paraphase of Aristotle's definition, says: "Every man in his physical nature is one individual single agent. He has likewise properties and principles, each of which may be considered separately and without regard to the respects which they have to each other. Neither of these are the nature we are taking a view of. But it is the inward frame of man considered as a *system* or *constitution:* whose several parts are united, not by a physical principle of individuation, but by the respects they have to each other; the chief of which is the subjection which the appetites, passions, and particular affections have to the one supreme principle of reflection or conscience. . . . Whoever will consider his own nature will see that the several appetites, passions, and particular affections have different respects amongst themselves. They are restraints upon and are in proportion to each other. This proportion is just and perfect when all these under principles are perfectly coincident with conscience so far as their nature permits, and in all cases under its absolute and entire direction. The least excess or defect, the least alteration of the due proportions amongst themselves, or of their coincidence with conscience, though not proceeding into action, is some degree of disorder in the moral constitution." *

We have here an interesting attempt to reproduce the Aristotelian doctrine. But there is one point in

* *Sermons*, III. n.

which it requires correction if we would bring it into harmony with the original. In representing "conscience," which is the equivalent of Aristotle's "reason," as a separate principle in the soul, standing above the other elements and imposing upon them a law of its own, it just misses the central point of the Aristotelian conception. Such a way of taking it might, indeed, seem to harmonize with Aristotle's conception of life as a work of art. From this point of view there is nothing to hinder us from understanding the idea of the whole or system into which the material has to be moulded as something imported, like the artist's idea of the statue, from without. It is, however, precisely this mistake that we have guarded ourselves against by noticing the inadequacy of the artistic metaphor to express Aristotle's true view. In criticizing, therefore, any action or emotion, we are directed, not to the pronouncements of an authoritative principle which, while making itself felt within the soul, yet has no organic connexion with it, but simply to the inner form or constitution of the soul itself, of which the action is the partial manifestation. It is true, indeed (and this subjective side of the good act is what chiefly impresses writers of the school of Butler), that an action which succeeds in hitting the mean or being in true proportion, whether in imagination or in fact, is apt to be accompanied with a peculiar feeling of satisfaction; an action that fails to do so, with a feeling of dissatisfaction. And this, if we choose, we may call "conscience"—good or bad, as the case may be. But

this feeling is not the result of the harmony (or discordance) of the act with the requirements of any separate principle, but simply represents the sense of expansion the soul experiences in connexion with an action which expresses its proper nature, and is therefore "whole-hearted," or of contraction when it fails to do so.* The criterion or standard is not this feeling, but the form or constitution of the soul itself. That act is good which expresses the form and content of the whole as nature intended it to be; that is bad which by the excess of one impairs the free development of others.

§ 3. "*The Prudent Man.*"

In the above discussion we have referred to the "whole" as the standard of the good act: the good act being that which takes account of and includes all the elements in a harmonious whole. The question then rises as to the content of this "whole," and the direction in which we are to look for its concrete embodiment. It is just from the point of view of this question that the full bearing of the last addition, viz. "as the prudent man would determine it," becomes apparent. It might at first appear as though this addition were merely a verbal one,† amounting to the substitution of the reasonable man for the abstract reason. But taken in connexion with the meaning of "prudence" and the "prudent man," hereafter to be defined,‡ it forms a characteristic link between the

* Cp. what is said, p. 194 foll. below, on the conditions of pleasure and pain in general.

† See Note D.

‡ See chapter x. below.

abstract and the concrete. Reason is to Aristotle the organizing principle in life, subordinating and adapting the parts to the purpose of the whole. This principle finds its concrete expression in the "prudent man," who is the living embodiment of all that is best in the social order of his time and country. Just as the meaning of right action can only be understood through experience of the concrete act, so the full meaning of the reasonable life comes best home to us through living contact with the reasonable man. The reason which we see in ourselves as through a glass darkly, we meet with in him face to face; wisdom on our part is to seek for wisdom in him. As one of the wise men of our own time has put it: "All men are made or make themselves different in their approaches to different men, and the secret of goodness and greatness is in choosing *whom* you will approach and live with, through the crowding, obvious people who seem to live with you." * In phrases like this we must, moreover, recollect that to the Greek observer it was probably much more evident than it is to us, that the men whom he recognized as wise and great—Solon, Pericles, Socrates—were the representatives of what was best in the social order he saw around him. It is true that in the case of Socrates we seem to have an example of the wise man at issue with the State and his time. But this was an exception which proved the rule, for the condemnation of Socrates was a rude shock to Greek sentiment, and

* R. B. Browning's Letters.

to set it in its true light Plato feels himself obliged to put into his mouth the celebrated passage in the *Crito*, in which, after showing that he owes to Athenian institutions all that is of any value in his life, he maintains that he departs for the other world the victim, not of the *laws*, but of man. Read in this sense, the standard to which the definition ultimately points is that of the good man as represented by the best types which history affords, types which themselves in turn represent in the fullest manner the unbroken continuity which exists between social and individual, civic and private life.

§ 4. *The Mean is itself an Extreme.*

[II. c. vi. § 17.]

In spite of these explanations it is difficult for the modern student to avoid the feeling (which is rather deepened than dissipated in reading the further attempt "to apply it to details" in chap. vii.) that somehow or other the definition is inadequate, and fails, after all, to express the true inwardness of virtue. For does it not seem to reduce virtue to the mere avoidance of vice—to tell us what it is not, rather than what it is? To return to the analogy of the arts, is it not as though, in trying to describe the merits of a work of art, we were to enumerate merely the mistakes which the artist had succeeded in avoiding? Or, again, to take the truer analogy of a natural organism, as though we were to describe the life of the plant or animal as a series of lucky escapes

from death? As Grant very well puts it: "Resolve the statue or the building into stone and the laws of proportion, and no worthy causes of the former beautiful result seem now left behind. So, also, resolve a virtuous act into the passions and some quantitative law, and it seems to be rather destroyed than analyzed. . . . An act of bravery seems beautiful and noble; when we reduce this to a balance between the instincts of fear and self-confidence, the glory of it is gone." The difficulty, he continues, seems still greater when we think of more distinctly Christian virtues, such as humility, charity, forgiveness of injuries. It is quite true that just as there is a point where the beauty of the brave act would be destroyed by pushing it to folly, and, again, by controlling it into caution, so there is a point at which humility will become grovelling, charity weak, and forgiveness spiritless. "But there seems in them something which is also their chief characteristic, and which is beyond and different from this quality of the mean."* Even the additional reference to the prudent man does not help us here, for, after all, prudence or wisdom is apt to be conceived of rather as a negative than a positive virtue—a fact which the Greeks themselves recognized in representing the "demon," or spirit of wisdom, in Socrates as a voice warning him against what was wrong rather than an inspiration as to what was right.

In reply to this it must be admitted that Aristotle's account of virtue as a mean between two extremes

* *Op. cit.* i. pp. 260, 261.

fails to give us the ultimate *rationale* of moral excellence. This is necessarily so. The definition is an analysis of the general conditions which must be observed if an act is to be good. But the goodness of an act just consists in its *individuality*, in its being what is precisely demanded of the individual by the particular circumstances of the case. And this is precisely what no definition—which, as the logician would tell us, is of the general—can give.

Something like this seems to be in Aristotle's mind when he adds the important rider to the definition: "When, therefore, we are seeking a logical definition of virtue, we must describe it as a mean. But we must remember that when we look at it from the point of view of what is best and 'well done,' it is itself an extreme." The remark, as Grant says, shows the admirable balance in Aristotle's mind between the abstract and the concrete. It recalls us from the logical analysis to the real thing that is being analyzed. Excellence, he had begun by saying, is that which makes a thing to be in reality what it had the potentiality of being. To be so—in other words, to be or realize itself—is the good at which everything aims. To this, man is no exception. He, also, to use Spinoza's phrase, tries to persevere in his own essence. He struggles to be what he truly is, and to realize himself. In a good action he succeeds for a moment, as it were, in doing so. He expresses his whole self, and stands forth as what he truly is. Here there can be no talk of virtue being a mean. Such a definition is good enough as telling us how this result

looks from the side of the passions, through the medium of which it is achieved ; or, again, how it looks from the point of view of times and seasons and human circumstances generally. It does not tell us how it looks from the side of the man himself, *i.e.* how it looks *sub specie aeternitatis.* From this side it is not a mean. Here it is an extreme, for it is the best that is in him—"the thing he was made for."

§ 5. *Can there be a "Habit of choosing?"*

But we have hitherto avoided what the student of psychology will probably feel to be the main difficulty in Aristotle's doctrine of virtue. The basis of virtue in Aristotle's view is, as we have seen, habit. Now the aspect of habit which has received the most attention is its unconsciousness and uniformity. "Habit," says Professor Baldwin, "means loss of oversight, diffusion of attention, subsiding consciousness ;" and, again, "Habit means invariableness, repetition, reproduction." On the other hand, virtue is in essence choice: it is, as Aristotle says, a habit of choosing the mean, and therefore implies attributes apparently the precise opposite of those which Professor Baldwin mentions, viz. oversight, concentrated attention, rising consciousness. Moreover, as we have just seen, it involves adaptation. The mean is relative to the individual case. Morality, we might say, never repeats itself. So far, therefore, from virtue or perfection being a habit, we seem driven to say with Fichte that "to form a habit is to fail." This is the

keynote of the view which was prominent in the educational writers of last century, and received most forcible expression in Rousseau's *Émile*, where the doctrine is boldly stated that the only habit a child should form is the habit of forming none.

The only way of meeting this difficulty, which arises from an imperfect analysis of the psychological conditions of habit, is to carry our analysis a step further. In the first place, every habit, whether of thought or action, certainly is, as Professor Baldwin implies, a tendency or propensity to act in a particular way in response to a stimulus. Habit is thus distinguished from instinct in being acquired by the individual himself through the repetition of certain kinds of action. This tendency has two sides or poles—a positive and a negative. On the one hand it is a tendency to turn the flow of nervous energy in a particular direction; on the other hand, to inhibit the flow in a contrary direction. Sometimes one of these is prominent in the habit, sometimes the other. We need not stop to illustrate so familiar a point. We can all recognize in ourselves the economy of nervous energy effected by habits of regularity in our daily life; from acting in a particular manner the mind acquires an ease and spontaneity of action comparable to the flow of a stream in the bed it has once formed. The value of this (the conservative element in habit), as the basis of progress, although, as we have seen, it was in danger of being overlooked by writers of last century, may now be said to be a commonplace of educational literature.

Without it, it would be impossible for the human organism either to live or learn; impossible to live *because* impossible to learn.

But a habit is not merely a tendency to repetition. There is a further element, which modern psychologists have tended to ignore, but which Aristotle, with his extraordinary concreteness of mind, has clearly grasped. To neglect this element is to misunderstand his whole doctrine. Habit also implies adaptation. The whole value of the tendency to act in a particular way consists in leaving the attention free for the particular adaptation that is required. Thus, to take a simple example, the value of the habit of setting to work at a particular time in the day is that our energies are no longer dissipated and our attention distracted with the necessity to resist counter attractions. The strong flow of nervous energy in that particular direction has its counterpart in the mind's imperviousness to contrary suggestions. But this is only one side of the student's habit. If this were all, his mental condition might be compared to a ship whose decks are cleared for action which never comes off. The other side is the active direction of the attention to the end to be attained, viz. the work of this particular day. To identify habit, therefore, with the mere repetition of actions already performed is wholly to fail to grasp its place in concrete human life.

Now, morality is only a highly developed case of what we have described as habit in general, though just on this account it is the better adapted to

illustrate the articulate structure of habit.* It must, of course, in the *first* place be admitted that moral action, in the proper sense of the word, is only possible on the basis of a tendency acquired by repeatedly acting in a particular way under the influence of the complex stimulus which we call a "situation." This tendency, as we have seen, has two poles. On the one hand it means the absence of temptation, distraction, friction, with the corresponding freedom to act as the situation requires. On the other hand it means the power thus acquired to meet the situation in a particular way—the way, namely, which Aristotle describes as aiming at the mean, and which we have interpreted as that which satisfies completely the requirements of the situation. But, in the *second* place, morality only becomes real in the actual meeting of character and occasion; in other words, in the proportionate or harmonious action. These two elements of habit, so far from being opposed to one another, are complementary sides of the same fact, standing to each other as the potential to the real, organ to function, body to soul. The formed tendency is that which makes prompt and precise adaptation possible; the precise adaptation is that which gives meaning and value to a tendency otherwise purely mechanical and inhuman.

If we hold these two sides of habit clearly before us, we shall have no difficulty in understanding what

* The mistake into which psychologists have here fallen is probably largely due to the class of illustration—mainly of the "collar and stud" type—to which they have confined themselves.

Aristotle means by calling virtue a habit, and in avoiding the opposite errors which consist in identifying it with knowledge (adaptation) without admixture of habit, on the one hand, and with the habit of resistance to impulse without intelligent adaptation to the circumstances or with a view to any positive achievement, on the other.

The twofold aspect of habit above emphasized can be strikingly illustrated from a field which is usually taken as exhibiting free choice at its highest level—I mean the field of tragedy. In such a case as that of Antigone the choice is represented as one between obedience to the unwritten and unfailing laws of heaven, and submission to the arbitrary decrees of Creon. But between these there is no choice for Antigone. Her character, *i.e.* her normal habit of willing, has bent her soul in one direction. The suggestions of Ismene in the contrary direction are to her meaningless. Her whole force is thus available for the act itself, the adjustment of her conduct to a situation which is new to the world—the rival claims of king and conscience. The tragedy consists here, as elsewhere, in the inevitableness of the choice that springs from previous habits of action and of thought. In this sense all the great tragedies are the tragedies of habit.

NOTE.—The difficulty to which the above is an attempt to reply seems inadequately met by the current accounts of habit. Thus Professor Baldwin (*Mental Development in the Child and the Race*) is so impressed with the element of identity in habit that he tends to represent the element of difference and adaptation as a species of accidental variation. In this sense, to describe morality as a habit can only

be an engaging paradox, and we have an odd echo of the above-quoted axiom of Rousseau in the description of morality as "the habit of violating habits" (*Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development*, p. 55). This of course is only true in the sense that every moral habit involves adaptation—but so does every other habit. Mr. Stout (*Analytic Psychology*, vol. i. p. 258 foll.), going further, draws a distinction between the habits that consist of movements that have become mechanical and automatic, and habits of thinking and willing. "Automatic processes," he says, "may enter as component parts into a total process which, as a whole, is very far from being automatic. The inverse of this is seen in habits of thinking and willing. Here a comprehensive habitual tendency realizes itself on special occasions by means of special processes which are not habitual." It is not clear from Mr. Stout's account whether he regards these as separate *kinds* of habit, or only two elements which are present in varying proportions in all habits. The above analysis is directed to show that the latter is the true view.

CHAPTER VII.

COURAGE.

"And he is to be deemed courageous who, having the element of passion working in him, preserves in the midst of pain and pleasure the notion of danger which reason prescribes."

PLATO.

§ 1. *The Platonic and Aristotelian Conceptions of Courage.*

IN a well-known passage in the *Republic*, Socrates is made by Plato to describe courage as a species of holding fast, and when he is asked what species, to reply: holding fast to the true opinion as to the proper objects of fear and all other things. The citizen-soldier into whose soul this opinion has been dyed by law and education as a good colour is dyed into a properly prepared fleece of wool, holds to it, and keeps his head amid the temptations of pleasure, "mightier solvent far than soap or soda," and pain and fear and desire, "more potent washes than any lye." In this passage Plato makes no distinction between courage and temperance, and although afterwards he proceeds to assign one to the soldiers, the other to the

industrial classes, as the virtues that enable them severally to perform their function, he never loses sight of their essential unity.

In marked contrast herein to Plato, Aristotle starts from the point of view of the difference of these two virtues, explaining that while the field of courage is pain and fear, that of temperance is pleasure. This of course is true enough, but we cannot help feeling that with the advance of analysis we have lost an element of insight, and that Plato is nearer the truth when he represents both of them as having a common root in the self-command that is begotten of right principles worked into a ground of good natural disposition by good laws and good schooling.

While they are thus contrasted, there are many points which the Platonic and Aristotelian accounts of courage have in common; and that which strikes the modern reader most forcibly is the narrowness of the scope assigned to the virtue. In both of them the type of true courage is taken to be the soldier in the battle-field, and thus the emphasis is laid upon what to us is a comparatively insignificant part of it. This limitation of the virtue to the soldier type seems to create a gulf between ancient and modern ideas on this subject, and to obscure the application to modern conditions of what is here said. Closer examination, however, will, I think, show us that the difficulty is created by the illustration rather than by the analysis. For this reason it will be better, with a view to understanding the real scope of Aristotle's conception, to neglect meantime the illustration and confine ourselves

to the main features to which the analysis calls our attention.

§ 2. *Marks of True Courage.*

[III. c. viii.]

Both Plato and Aristotle conceive of courage as having its root in natural instinct. In a humorous passage in the *Republic*, Plato finds anticipations of it in the noble dog which already begins to shows signs of the philosopher in the curious mixture of gentleness and courage displayed in relation to men. We have already seen how Aristotle recognizes courage as one of the virtues which normally form a part of the natural endowment of a child. In harmony with this, while pointing out that "courageous men are actually men of quick passion," and that the truly courageous man acts with passion for his ally, Aristotle is careful to distinguish true courage in the passage before us from the courage of mere animal energy, "rushing on danger under the stimulus of pain or passion, and without foresight of the grounds of alarm."

What, then, must be added in order that the animal instinct may be transformed into an element of true human courage? We shall be led to the answer if we recall what has already been said of the limitations of qualities which are merely instinctive.*

(*a*) One of these was their unreliability. It is in the light of this test of reliability that Aristotle bids us

* See chapter v.

class as a spurious form of courage that which springs from mere sanguineness or confidence of success. "The courage of the sanguine man is the result of temporary feeling; he is elated by a perhaps groundless hope of victory. But the truly courageous man is actuated by steady principle. His nature is such that the law of duty is always before his eyes. Hence you may take him on a sudden without discomposing him. His courage will be ready on the shortest notice, because it is *himself*, not a passing mood" (Stewart).

(*b*) Another defect of merely natural courage is that it is apt to be present as an isolated element of promise in a man's nature, and on the principle *corruptio optimi pessima* may coexist with a general habit of evil-doing which is all the more dangerous to society for the combination. As Aristotle himself hints in the passage quoted, courage of this kind serves only to make mischief more mischievous, just as a heavy body has a worse fall from its being heavy.*

(*c*) It is not sufficient that a man should respond mechanically to the call of danger nor, again, that his actions should be socially beneficial. The true significance of Aristotle's view comes out in connexion with what he says of the state of the man's mind. We have already seen how in the case of virtue in general it is essential that a man should know what he is about; and, secondly, that he should act from a right motive. These points Aristotle is careful to illustrate from the case of courage. In the first place, true courage is clearly distinguishable from the courage of

* See Browning's *Halbert and Hob.*

ignorance---a point happily illustrated from an incident in the siege of Corinth * (392 B.C.), where a party of Lacedæmonian horse under their leader Pasimachus covered the retreat of the Sicyonians by dismounting and themselves taking their shields. In the belief that the familiar Σ-marked bucklers covered the inferior foe, the Argives boldly advanced to the attack, the spuriousness of their courage, successful though it was in the immediate onset, being proved by their subsequent flight when they became aware of the presence of the Lacedæmonians.

But, secondly, mere knowledge, even when combined with perfect training, is not of itself enough. A man may have the requisite knowledge and training, and yet for that very reason fall short of true courage. This point is brought out in the interesting and apparently contradictory passage (c. viii. § 6), in which Aristotle shows that a man may be steady in alarms, retaining the head to grasp the situation and use all his advantages to meet it, and yet after all be a coward, the reason being that there is no true citizen principle behind his act. Passing over the obvious unfairness in identifying the Socratic doctrine with the theory that experience necessarily gives courage, we come, in this distinction between the professional and the citizen-soldier, to the crucial point of the whole analysis, dividing once for all merely instinctive and merely habitual from true human courage. True courage must be *for a noble object.* Here, as in all true excellence, action and object,

* Xenophon, *History of Greece*, iv. 4.

consequence and motive, are inseparable. Unless the action is inspired by a noble motive, and permeated throughout its whole structure by the quality of a noble character, it has no claim to the name of courage. It is this that is the basis of the series of fine distinctions Aristotle draws in chaps. vii. § 13 and viii. §§ 1–5, marking off true courage from that which is merely mercenary (c. viii. § 6 foll.), from that which is merely prudential (c. viii. § 4), from the courage of despair, which is only a form of cowardice (c. vii. § 13), and even from that form which bears the closest resemblance to true courage, the courage of shame or of ambition (c. viii. §§ 1–3).

How, we may ask, is this noble object to be conceived? The passage before us does not seem to throw any direct light on this question. Indeed, the section (c. vi. § 6) in which it is most directly alluded to seems rather to add a new element of difficulty by suggesting that the courageous act must be done simply because it is courageous, and that courage is valuable for the sake of courage. If, however, we keep steadily before us what has already been said of the unity of the virtues on the one hand, and the unity of the noble character and noble city life on the other, we shall have no difficulty in avoiding this mistake. We shall then notice, in the first place, that the emphasis is here laid, not upon the isolated act of courage, but upon the type of character which the courageous act expresses (it is this and not the act that is the "fine thing"); and in the second place, that neither is this character an isolated phenomenon, but only

the inner side of the city life to which it ministers and in which it finds its end.

§ 3. *The Greek and Modern Ideals of Courage.*

If with this analysis before us we now return to the limitations which, as already said, strike the modern reader in these sections, we shall have less difficulty in understanding their source, and in seeing that the difference between Aristotle's idea and our own consists rather in a widening of the field in which the virtue is exercised than in any fundamental divergence of principle. Starting with the said limitations, we may state them as follows. In the first place, physical pains, such as those of sickness, fatigue, deprivation, even death, encountered in other fields than war, in the meeting of which with a cheerful heart so much of modern heroism consists, are either ignored or expressly excluded.* As Green very well says, "If a 'Christian worker' who devotes himself, unnoticed and unrewarded, at the risk of life and the sacrifice of every pleasure but that of his work, to the service of the sick, the ignorant, and the debased, were told that his ideal of virtue was in principle the same as that of the ἀνδρεῖος, 'the brave man,' described by Aristotle, and if he were induced to read the description, he would probably seem to himself to find nothing of his ideal in it." † In the second place, the wide field of what we are agreed to call "moral" heroism is

* See chap. vi. §§ 7, 11, and 12.

† *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 277.

left wholly untouched. Aristotle's conception of courage, as of happiness, seems to presuppose the existence of a favourable *milieu*. There is no mention, for instance, of the courage which is based upon the invigorating belief in the power of character over circumstances, and which consists in pursuing some noble purpose in the face of adverse influences, including even hostile social opinion. Still less of that form of courage which has risen into prominence in modern, one might almost say recent times, and which consists in actively cherishing the belief in the ultimate rationality of the world, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding—a belief which, as Professor James insists, is among ourselves the source of all strenuous living. To understand how these limitations spring severally from the widening of our social and intellectual outlook we must recall some of the respects in which this widening is most marked.*

(1) To the Greek philosopher the city-state was the symbol of all that was excellent in life. Amongst a homogeneous society of equals the sphere of duty was clearly defined. The end or function of justice or virtue in general was the maintenance of the political equilibrium. As the point at which this equilibrium was most exposed to attack, and where danger was most to be encountered in its service, was on the side of its military independence, it was natural that the particular virtue of courage should be conceived of as chiefly exhibited in physical warfare. With us, on the other hand, the conception of the city-state

* Cp. what is said in the Introduction.

as the embodiment of all that is most excellent in life and the all-embracing end, has broadened into that of the moral possibilities that are open to all. Corresponding to this we have the extension of the field of moral virtue in general, from the limited liability of the Greek citizen for the maintenance of a narrow political equilibrium, to the duty that rests on each as a man to further by all the means that lie in his power the cause of moral progress in the world; of courage in particular, to all the nameless personal sacrifices that the individual is called upon to make in forwarding the wider object. This does not, of course, mean that courage in ceasing to be merely civic has ceased to be social, but that we have substituted for the conception of a homogeneous society of equals, which found a visible symbol in the temple-crowned cities of Hellas, that of a society, the homogeneousness of which is to be looked for in a will inspired by a common ideal of righteous living.

This last feature of the modern virtue suggests a further contrast. To the change in the scope of the virtue we must add also a change in the motive, amounting in reality to a purification of it. We conceive of Aristotle's courageous man as acting in full view of his fellow-citizens for an object whose value and nobility were recognized by all whose opinion was worth having. Given these encouraging conditions, courage becomes comparatively easy. On the other hand, as Green says, "The secondary motives which assist self-devotion in war, or in the performance of functions of recognized utility before

the eyes of fellow-citizens, are absent when neither from the recipients of the service done nor from any spectators of it, can any such praise be forthcoming as might confirm the agent in the consciousness of doing nobly." In yet another point the modern virtue by reason of this change is more "disinterested," in that while the personal share of the Greek citizen in the life for which he fought could not fail to be present to his mind in the moment of danger, this modern type of heroism rests on faith in a moral order which is believed in as only a distant possibility for the race.

(2) In the light of this wider conception of the "object" we can further understand the place which the form of courage we call moral holds in our view. The courage shown, say in the support of an unpopular cause, has comparatively little place in the Greek conception. The recognized elements in human life had attained in the Greek type of civilization the maximum of development as compared with other societies—with the consequence that the established and the conventional stood in the eyes of even the best citizens for the type of the natural and normal, in a way that among us, with our more complex ideal of what society might be, is no longer possible. It is true that the Greek also had his ideal of courageous independence of popular opinion in such men as Phocion and Aristides, and his faith in the identity of the ideal and the actual had in later years been rudely shaken by the condemnation of Socrates. Yet in many of these cases there was a suggestion of personal

waywardness and eccentricity which detracted from their moral value, and in view of the caricature of the attitude of mind they represented, as exhibited in the vagaries of the Cynic dissenters, even a philosopher might be excused if he hesitated to rank independence of thought and action, and the temper that makes a man ready to face the personal loss it might involve, as an element in ideal excellence.

The last of the above-mentioned points of difference between ancient and modern conceptions of courage is doubtless traceable to our own keener sense of the sadness of things. Here also the greater simplicity and harmony of the social conditions in the Greek state is one of the chief factors to be taken into account, tending, as it did, to obscure the deeper problems of life. And if to this we add the comparative lightness with which the wider problem of the balance of good and evil in the *world* weighed on the Greek mind, we shall have little difficulty in understanding why the need of a courage, the essence of which consists in upholding faith in a moral order in obvious contrast to existing conditions of life, was little felt. Under modern conditions, on the other hand, it is more difficult to believe that

> "God's in His Heaven,
> All's right with the world;"

and the man who holds unfalteringly to this faith exhibits a type of courage which, if a new element in moral excellence, is, we feel, a permanent addition to our conception of what is implied in it. In an age

of shaken creeds and widespread intellectual hesitancy the power of maintaining a belief in moral potentialities underlying apparent weakness and failure, moral order underlying apparent confusion, may even be of supreme value, and rightly take its place as perhaps the cardinal virtue of our own time. Its importance is emphasized by the prominence of the opposite phase of thought in much modern literature, and the need there is of an equally powerful note of courage and serenity. From this point of view a new light may be thrown upon the function of the poet in our own time. We might almost say that a new type of poet has been developed in the writers—and they are the greatest—who sound this note: the "Hero as Poet" whom Carlyle speaks of. Remaining himself undismayed, he rallies his fellows around him, and becomes a leader in courageous living. To take an instance from recent biography, it is usual to think of William Morris as combining an almost Hellenic simplicity of character with a Hellenic cheerfulness and serene enjoyment in the exercise of his marvellous creative faculty. Yet his biographer calls attention to another side of his character, in the profound sense he has of the need of maintaining a belief in human progress as the basis of human effort.*

* Speaking half for the old Northmen and more than half for himself, Morris says: "It may be that the world shall be weary of itself and sicken, and none but faint hearts be left—who knows? So, at any rate, comes the end at last, so comes the great strife; and, like the kings and heroes that they have loved, here also must the gods die—the gods who made that strifeful, imperfect earth—not blindly indeed, but fore-doomed. One by one they extinguish for ever some dread or

Morris, however, had so many of the conditions essential to happiness in the Aristotelian sense that a comparatively slight adjustment of the Greek view of life is required to recognize him as the type of the "happy man." A more characteristic modern instance, appealing to us with perhaps greater force, is to be found in Robert Louis Stevenson, a creative artist, rejoicing in the life on which he physically had so slender a hold, resolutely triumphing by force of character over unfavourable circumstances. He also, like Morris, had a misgiving that "Odin was dead." But he also, like him, met it with the belief that all was not lost nor losable. "I would believe in the ultimate decency of things, even though I woke in Hell," is one among other brave sayings in which we realize, together with "the substantial identity" which Green notes between ancient and modern conceptions of courage, the immense advance in depth and spirituality which the latter has made.*

misery that all this time has brooded over life, and one by one, their work accomplished, they die ; till at last the great destruction breaks out over all things, and the old heaven and earth are gone, and then a new heaven and earth. What goes on there? Who shall say of us who know only of rest and peace by toil and strife? And what shall be our share in it? Well, sometimes we must needs think that we shall live again ; yet, if that were not, would it not be enough that we helped to make this unnameable glory, and lived not altogether deedless? Think of the joy we have in praising great men, and how we turn their stories over and over, and fashion their lives for our joy. And this also we ourselves may give to the world. This seems to me pretty much the religion of the Northmen. I think one would be a happy man if one could hold it, in spite of the wild dreams and dreadful imaginings that hung about it here and there."—*Life of William Morris*, by J. W. Mackail, vol. i. p. 333 (condensed).

* See, for example, the passage quoted, Note E.

CHAPTER VIII.

TEMPERANCE.

"Next consider Temperance; this, as far as I can see at present, has more of the nature of symphony and harmony than the preceding."

PLATO.

§ 1. *Features in Aristotle's Conception of Temperance.*

[III. cc. x. foll.]

IN the account here given of the virtue of Temperance there is much with which the modern student finds himself in sympathy. He will be struck, for instance, with the sobriety of the statement and the absence of any false note of asceticism. Of the particular pleasures, indeed, in respect to which temperance is said to be the mean, Aristotle seems, as we shall see, to be curiously suspicious, but with pleasure in general he has no quarrel. He tells us that it is part of his ideal of the temperate man not only to take the ordinary pleasures of life as they come, but to desire to have them (c. xi. § 8). The reader will further be struck with the disinterestedness of this virtue as conceived by Aristotle. There is no false attempt to "rationalize" it, as a modern utilitarian might do by emphasizing the consequences to

individual health and happiness of its neglect. As Plato had declared that the man who is temperate for such a reason overcomes only because he is overcome by pleasure, and is "temperate through intemperance," * so Aristotle would have refused to recognize any such merely prudential temperance as a form of "excellence." He is quite aware of the effect of intemperance upon "health and good condition," but it is clearly the injury done through this loss to his efficiency as a citizen, and not to individual happiness, that is in his mind. So far is he from conceiving of temperance as a form of prudence that he lays no emphasis on its "consequences" at all, but treats it throughout simply as an element in the "ideal excellence" which it is the "aim" of the good man to realize as completely as possible. In these respects there is no difference between the Aristotelian and the modern philosophical conception of temperance. To Aristotle, as to us, the principle which underlies the exercise of self-restraint in the presence of the allurements of pleasure is the acceptance of a higher ideal of life than that of merely individual satisfaction.

§ 2. *Limitations of Ancient Conceptions of Temperance.*

It is when we come to the limits which Aristotle here sets to the field of the virtue that dissatisfaction begins. If the treatment of courage is felt to be inadequate, that of temperance falls still further short of modern requirements. Not only is the field of its

* *Phaedo*, 68 E.

exercise limited to the pleasures of the body, but among them it is limited to taste and touch. Even the former of these senses is finally excluded, and the virtue apparently confined to a very moderate degree of self-restraint in the presence of the allurements of the grosser sense. "The first impression of any one who came to this account having his mind charged with the highest lessons of Christian self-denial would be of its great poverty—a poverty the more striking, as it will probably appear, in the case of 'temperance' than in the case of 'courage.' He finds 'temperance' restricted by Aristotle to control over the mere animal appetites, or, more exactly, to control over desire for the pleasures incidental to the satisfaction of these appetites. The particular usage of a name, indeed, is of slight importance. If Aristotle had reasons for limiting temperance to a certain meaning, and made up elsewhere for what is lacking in his account of the virtue described under the name, no fault could be found. But temperance and courage between them have to do duty for the whole of what we understand by self-denial." * It is true that there is a sense in which, according to Aristotle, all virtue is self-control or self-denial, inasmuch as it is the habit of aiming at a mean which unregulated impulse and passion tend to overpass. This points to a sense in which temperance might be said to be co-extensive with all virtue, but it does not make up for the deficiencies of the particular virtue. "However little," Green

* Green, *Proleg.* bk. iii. ch. v. p. 281 foll. The comparison in the succeeding sections follows closely Green's classical treatment.

concludes, "we may have cleared up the moral demand which we express to ourselves as the duty of self-denial, we cannot get rid of the conviction that it is a demand, at any rate, of much wider significance in regard to indulgence in pleasures than that which Aristotle describes as actuating the temperate man; nor do we find the deficiency made good in any account which he gives of other forms of virtue."

In two respects especially does the ancient ideal seem to fall short of ours. In the first place, Aristotle expressly excludes the higher bodily pleasures of sight and sound, and the pleasures of the soul, or, as we might say, intellectual and æsthetic pleasure. Yet, as Green points out, "it is just such pleasures as these of which the renunciation is involved in that self-denial which in our impartial and unsophisticated judgment we most admire—that which in our consciences we set before ourselves as the highest ideal. It would seem no great thing to us that in the service of mankind one should confine himself to necessary food and drink, and should observe the strictest limitations of Christian morality in the matter of sexual indulgence—and it is such indulgence alone, we must remember, not the enjoyments of family life, that would fall within the class of pleasures in which, according to the Greek philosophers, temperance is exercised. We have examples of much severer sacrifice. There are men, we know, who, with the keenest sensibility to such pleasures as those of 'gratified ambition and love of learning,' yet deliberately forego them; who shut themselves out from

an abundance of æsthetic enjoyments which would be open to them, as well as from those of family life." * In the second place, and permitting ourselves to go beyond the text before us, we know that in respect to the pleasures which he does mention, the ancient standard is far less exacting than ours. Thus, in regard to "meats and drinks," it has often been noticed how strangely insensitive even the best of the Greeks were to excesses of which the average good citizen would now be ashamed. Among some of his followers not the least remarkable feature in the self-command of their saint and hero Socrates, was his power of keeping his head in a drinking bout. And in regard to the more serious forms of the corresponding vice which the modern "incontinence" specifically denotes, Green has observed that "the limit which the philosophers would have drawn between lawful and lawless love would not have been that which our consciences would call on us to observe." Fully to understand the ground of this difference between ancient and modern conceptions, we must ask in the first place what it is in the pleasures of taste and touch which leads ancient philosophy to assign the duty of regulating them to a special virtue; and, secondly, what it is in modern times that has led to so great an extension of the field of self-denial.

* Green, *Proleg.* bk. iii. ch. v. p. 29.

§ 3. *Greek Attitude to Pleasures of the Body.*

In reference to the former question, it has to be observed that the reason assigned in c. x. §§ 7 and 8, can hardly be the true one. It is of course true that there is a deeper, or, as Aristotle would say, a more natural ground for condemning the glutton and the drunkard than any merely utilitarian estimate of the consequences to health and happiness. Our moral judgments here witness to the fundamental distinction between the lower and the higher life. Yet, as Green points out, it is a false philosophical gloss on these judgments to attribute them to the fact that indulgences of this kind "are shared by the lower animals," whereas the higher pleasures are distinctly human. We may very well ask whether it is so certain, as § 7 seems to assume, that the lower animals are incapable of deriving disinterested pleasure from sights and sounds, not to speak of pleasures still more obviously "of the soul," such as friendship or the performance of duty. Even their pleasures of smell are so obviously different, as Professor Stewart remarks, from any with which our less developed senses make us acquainted, that it would be rash to say that they are merely the result of association with the grosser senses. But, passing over this, it is further questionable whether the brutes ever do indulge in these lower pleasures in such a way as to incapacitate themselves for the performance of the functions appropriate to their nature. What makes it possible for man to go to excess in these pleasures seems rather

to be what distinguishes him from the lower animals than the appetites he has in common with them—the power of imaginatively clothing them with attractions other than those derived from the mere satisfaction of the appetite, and thus of making them an object of specific desire. As Green puts it, "It is probably never the pleasure of drinking, strictly so called, that leads a man to get drunk. The mere pleasure of eating, apart from the gratification of vanity and indefinable social enjoyments, have but a slight share in promoting the 'excesses of the table.' The temptations to sexual immorality would be far less formidable if the attractive pleasure consisted merely in the satisfaction of sexual appetite." The light that leads him astray is "Light from Heaven," and even his intemperance may be said to bear witness to his capacity for a higher life.

We must look for the true ground of the Greek sentiment with regard to these pleasures in what is said of them lower down in c. xii. § 7, where it is the danger of disturbance by them of the rational order or system of life which is the point emphasized. This danger is increased by the peculiar insidiousness of these pleasures, indulgence in them fostering "innate tendency," "until perhaps waxing powerful and violent, the desires cast out reason altogether." It is in the light of passages such as these that we must read the suggestions in II. c. ix. § 4 (p. 246) of the advisability of giving a wide berth to pleasures of this kind, and even of renouncing them altogether.

In marked contrast to the suspicion of "the

pleasures of the body," shown in these passages as in a peculiar degree threatening the equilibrium of human life as conceived by the Greeks, we have the large belief here manifested in the pleasures of the higher senses, especially those of sight and hearing, as a substantial addition to human happiness.* If it were pointed out that these also might be carried to excess, Aristotle was prepared to admit it in the abstract (see c. x. § 3); but he has no vivid sense of any social circumstances under which it might become a part of the rational life, and so a pressing obligation on the part of individuals to set vigilant limits to indulgence in them, or even renounce them altogether. If we ask what it is in our own time that has led to the extension of the duty of self-denial to these pleasures and at the same time to the ideal of a still more complete control of the bodily appetites, we come to the second of the above questions.

§ 4. *Deepening in Modern Conceptions of the Scope of Temperance.*

The answer is to be looked for in our extended conception of the noble object or "beautiful thing," which gives meaning to the virtue of temperance. In two closely related respects we may say that our modern conceptions are in advance of the Greek.

(*a*) To the Greek, the "end" of temperance, as of

* This is connected with the distinction running through both Plato and Aristotle between things pleasant and desirable in themselves because they call forth harmonious activity of the soul independently of previous want, and things that are only accidentally pleasant as satisfying a want of the body. (See chapter xiii. p. 195, below.)

the other virtues, was the maintenance of a high level of civilization among a comparatively small group of cultured equals—supported by the labour and ministered to by the moral degradation of the great mass of the population. To us it is no less than the development in all who are capable of it—and all who bear the human shape are capable of it in some degree—of the elements of our common humanity. For the maxim: See that you treat free citizenship in your own person, and in the person of others, always as an end, and never as a means only, we have accepted, in principle at any rate, the maxim of Kant: See that you so treat Humanity. With this enlarged ideal of the end which is to be served goes an enlarged conception of the sacrifices which may be entailed by the service. From the Greek all that seemed to be required was such self-denial as was implied in abstaining from all excesses that would unfit a man for the performance of his civil or military duties. Under modern conditions individuals and classes may find themselves, in addition to this minimum, called upon, for the sake of objects which to the Greek would have seemed wholly impalpable and illusory, to accept a life in which the pleasures of the senses or even of the mind have little or no place. If it be said that, admitting all this, the Greek ideal of a society in which the higher pleasures will constitute an element in life which no one will be called upon to renounce, is nevertheless the higher of the two, the answer is twofold. In the first place, this ideal is not likely to be realized unless there are,

meantime, some who value more the opening of them to others than the personal enjoyment of them. In the second place, so far as the individual is concerned, there is no evidence that with the advance of civilization there will be less need for temperance and self-denial. On the contrary, it may very well be that just as the advance of civilization brings, as we have seen, new pains and fears, and with them new occasions for courage, so it brings with it new pleasures which the man who desires to live for larger aims has to do without.

(*b*) Following on this enlarged conception of the "end" has gone a more vivid sense of its spirituality. The beautiful object is not confined to the favoured members of any race or city, but consists in the development of the qualities of mind and character that are characteristic of man. Indulgences, therefore, whose relation to this human ideal was obscured by the narrowness with which it was conceived, are now seen to be incompatible with it. Loyalty to the wider ideal implies a more exacting standard in the individual's own life. Temperance not only has a broader basis: it moves on a higher plane. So far is it from being true, as has been sometimes suggested by ardent reformers, that the recognition of the wider claim of human brotherhood absolves from the obligation to maintain a strict standard of temperance in respect to the pleasures of the body, that it is precisely the ground upon which we have a right to expect a stricter discipline of thought and act than has hitherto been generally acknowledged.

CHAPTER IX.

IMPERFECT SELF-CONTROL.

"The great Socratic thesis that virtue is knowledge is an aspect of the truth which was lost almost as it was formed; and yet has to be recovered by every one for himself who would pass the limits of proverbial and popular philosophy. It is not to be regarded only as a passing stage in the history of the human mind, but as our anticipation of the reconcilement of the moral and intellectual elements of human nature."

JOWETT.

§ 1. *Continence and Temperance.*

[VII. cc. i. foll.]

The account of Temperance in Book III. is only part of the larger treatment of the habit of Self-control. The subject is resumed in Book VII., where the imperfect form of the virtue of Temperance known as Continence comes in for fuller discussion. While from the side of the growth of ethical ideas the former analysis is the more interesting, from the side of psychology and education the latter is undoubtedly the more important. Continence and incontinence differ from temperance and intemperance respectively —in the first place in falling short of the complete virtue and the settled vice; and, secondly, in being taken, contrary to the English usage, rather as the

element of self-control that enters into all virtue, than as confined to the pleasures of the lower bodily appetites: the writer* recognizing an incontinence "with respect to money, gain, or honour, or anger," as well as with respect to "nutrition, the propagation of the species, and other bodily appetities." Starting from the common idea that continence consists in knowing that a desire is wrong and at the bidding of reason refusing to indulge it—incontinence in doing at the bidding of passion what one knows to be wrong,† we are at once face to face with the question, How is incontinence possible?

§ 2. *The Socratic Doctrine of Continence.*

The way in which the great Greek philosophers dealt with this question is an interesting example of progressive analysis. The general form of the answer which Socrates gave is well-known. "Wisdom and temperance," says Xenophon, "he did not define; but the man who, knowing what is noble and good, does it, and, again, knowing what is base, avoids it, he called wise and temperate. And when asked if he considered those who know what is right but do what is wrong, wise and continent, he replied, 'On the contrary, I consider them foolish and incontinent, for I hold that of possible courses of action all men choose that which they think is best for them. I therefore consider those who act wrongly neither

* Perhaps Eudemus. I have disregarded the distinction between master and disciple in what follows.

† VII. c. i. § 6.

wise nor temperate.' And he held that justice and all other virtue was wisdom, for just actions and all other forms of excellence are noble and good, and no one who knew what these were would choose anything else in preference; nor, again, is it possible for those who do not know to do them; if they try they fail. . . . Since, then, just actions and all else that is noble and good, are forms of excellence, it is clear that justice and virtue in general consists in wisdom." *

In this statement we have the first recognition and application of a truth which the progress of psychology has established with growing emphasis, viz. that the will is controlled by ideas, and is in fact nothing more than our ideas in operation. To have perceived that in proportion to the strength with which an idea takes possession of the mind is the energy of the will in realizing it, and to have applied it to morals with the view of showing that once the idea of what is truly good has taken hold of us and become the centre of organization for other ideas, in other words once it is truly grasped or "known," it must bear down the opposition of ideas of partial good that are suggested by the appetites—was a great step in ethical analysis. While this important truth is foreshadowed in the Socratic doctrine that Virtue is Knowledge, Socrates seems to have had nothing to say on the causes of the strength of ideas and accordingly on the various degrees of their effectiveness. It is not, therefore, surprising that he failed to see the limits within which his doctrine held, and that he was obliged to

* *Memorabilia*, iii. 9.

leave it with an air of paradox clinging to it that it has never lost.

Two paradoxes especially seemed to follow directly from it—first, that there can be no goodness which does not spring from knowledge, *i.e.* from the clear apprehension of what is individually and socially best; and second, that, given this knowledge, it is impossible to act wrongly.* These paradoxes do not seem to have troubled Socrates much himself, who, as Xenophon tells us,† did not shrink from carrying his doctrine to its extreme consequences, and maintaining that it was better to do an unjust action voluntarily than a just one involuntarily. But it was clear to those who succeeded him that the doctrine could not be left in the form in which Socrates had left it, and that if its substantial truth was to be maintained, a more careful account must be given of what we mean by knowledge and ignorance.

§ 3. *Plato's Doctrine.*

It was here that the advancing analysis of the Platonic philosophy took up the problem. Plato drew a two-fold distinction, thereby giving the clue to its solution. He distinguished, in the first place, between merely possessing knowledge and having it in an available form—as we might say, "realizing" it. In the famous passage in the *Theætetus*,‡ where he compares the

* See *Ethics*, VII. c. ii. § 1: "Socrates indeed contested the whole position, maintaining that there is no such thing as incontinence."

† *Mem.* iv. 2; cf. Plato's Dialogue: *The Lesser Hippias.*

‡ Pp. 197, 198.

mind to an aviary in which birds may be without being in hand, we have the recognition of the two-fold manner in which an idea may be present, viz. either on the margin or in the focus of consciousness. Only that is truly known as an operative principle which is caught and fixed as the centre of attention. In the second place, he distinguished between mere opinion and "true opinion with definite or rational explanation added."* The former has no claim to real knowledge, being mere isolated *aperçu*, or resting on a basis of hearsay or tradition. Only when an idea is adopted into the organized system of experience, and thus rests for its reason on the nature of the mind as the organ of consistent thought, can it be said in any proper sense to be known. Combining these suggestions, we may thus be said to have before us three stages or phases of knowledge—first, the stage at which an idea is in the mind, but inoperative; second, that in which it is present to consciousness, and operative as an established fact or opinion; third, that in which its place is secured and its operation guaranteed by its organic connexion with the habitual content of the mind.

Applied to the field of practice, this distinction made it plain in what sense the Socratic paradox was to be understood. A practical idea, like any other, may be "known" in any one of these three senses: as a mere suggestion; as an established opinion recurring at the proper moment with force sufficient

* *Theætetus*, 208; cf. *Rep.* 477, and *passim*.

to carry the day against other suggestions; as a reasoned conviction, with which, as a part of the organized system which we call our will or ourselves, we can no more part than with personality itself. Education in the Platonic sense means the mind's progress from the lower of these modes of knowledge to the higher. When it is completed the result is such a grasp of the central principle of the Good in life, and such a belief in its reality, that by the side of it the suggestions of impulse and passion shall seem but the merest delusion. Virtue is knowledge in the sense that really to know and believe a thing to be right is to have accepted it as a necessary element in the organized life which we call our "good." So to have accepted it is equivalent to doing it, for it is to have made it a part of our will or self. On the other hand, vice is ignorance in the sense that just in so far as passion has been taken as a guide, the dominant purpose of a man's life has dropped out of view—has, in fact, ceased to be known.

The application of these distinctions to the problem of continence as discussed by Socrates in the earlier Platonic dialogues, such as the *Protagoras*, seems obvious; but in his later speculations Plato was occupied with the larger questions of education and government, and used the new light to show in what sense the citizens might be virtuous without being philosophers, rather than in what sense they may be vicious without being ignorant. Even in dealing with the former problem, moreover, he left his

doctrine in some obscurity, owing to the failure clearly to distinguish between philosophy and prudence or practical insight. And although this very failure enabled him to give all the more striking expression to the ultimate identity between knowledge and conduct, it gave his teaching an air of unreality, which reached its height in the famous paradox of the philosopher king.

§ 4. *Aristotle's Contribution.*

By carrying the analysis a step further, Aristotle succeeds not only in putting the unity of knowledge and virtue still further beyond question, but in stating it in a form that commends itself to common sense and is consistent with experience. It is true that he begins (c. ii. § 2 ; c. iii. § 4) by separating himself from his predecessors, setting aside the Socratic doctrine on the ground that "it evidently conflicts with experience," and criticizing the Platonic distinction between knowledge and opinion as irrelevant. But the difference is superficial, and as the analysis proceeds the real identity of principle becomes more and more obvious, until he is fain to admit that after all "what Socrates sought to establish really is the case ; for when passion carries a man away, what is present to his mind is not what is regarded as knowledge in the strict sense, nor is it such knowledge that is perverted by his passion" (c. iii. §§ 13 and 14).

Besides recognizing the fundamental distinction

between philosophy and practical wisdom, Aristotle further contributes a logical analysis of the practical judgment that underlies all voluntary action. Two elements are here distinguishable, corresponding to the major and minor premises of a syllogism. (1) There is the general principle or maxim, *e.g.* "what is harmful must be avoided;" (2) there is the "particular" (and Aristotle never allows us to forget that "conduct is concerned with particulars"), "this is harmful." In the light of this distinction combined with those already drawn, we obtain a closer view of the mental state of the man who is said to know what is right and do what is wrong. From the side of the content we see that the knowledge in question consists, like other knowledge, in a particular subsumed under a universal, and issuing in a judgment or conclusion. But these universals are, from the very nature of the case, of different kinds; especially our attention is called to the fundamental difference between what is pleasant (and therefore desirable) and what is right, as that which concerns us in the present discussion. The case of the incontinent man is the case in which the universal "it is pleasant" enters into effective competition with the imperfectly established universal "it is right." The latter, however, while never altogether absent from the mind, may be present with different degrees of effectiveness. (1) It may be wholly in the background, and merely produce a vague feeling of discomfort. A man has it, but he does not *use* it (c. iii. § 5). (2) It may be present as an actual suggestion, like the words a

man repeats when he is drunk or asleep. He has the knowledge, but he does not *realize* it (c. x. § 3; cf. iii. §§ 7 and 13). If we ask, finally, what it is that gives the wrong principle the advantage, we have to look for it in the reinforcement which the minor "this is pleasant" receives from unregulated appetite (c. iii. § 10). In this connexion there is fine insight in the remark that a main factor here is the muscular accompaniments of appetite. These alone when unchecked are sufficient to give the victory to the delusions of sense.

In these sections we are thus brought back to the point from which we started.* Courage and temperance result from the hold which practice gives of a true opinion as to the proper objects of fear and desire; in other words, as to the true value of things. The education of the courageous and temperate man has been such as to secure that in the moment of fear or desire the right view of life will remain in undisturbed possession dominating the delusions of sense, and rendering the will proof against the seductions of pain and pleasure. But the Platonic distinction between the different senses in which a man may be said to know has brought into prominence a further point. So long as the ideas that dominate the temperate and courageous man are *merely* opinions, they can never obtain the hold on the will that gives it full security against passion. So long they remain, after all, outside the man, and fail to obtain the

* Chapter vii. p. 103.

complete allegiance of his mind and will. That they may become a part of the man himself, they must be transformed from mere opinion into true knowledge, "by the addition of rational explanation." In other words, to invest them with full efficiency, the judgments of good and bad involved in habitual morality must be made clearly explicit, and we must know not only what it is right to do, but why it is right to do it. In maintaining that, in order to be complete, virtue must be penetrated by conscious intelligence or "knowledge of the end," Aristotle merely reproduces this doctrine. How he works it out in detail we shall see more fully hereafter.

Meantime, it is sufficient to have realized the educational value of the theory common to Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, that Virtue is Knowledge. Moral education aims at something more than conformity, however habitual and spontaneous, to moral requirements, viz. at investing the idea of a certain type of character, and the forms of social organization—family, school, city, business, etc.—which are its counterpart, with such power over the mind as shall make it proof against the inroad of other ideas which, however flattering to our sensuous nature, are incompatible with these wider objects.

CHAPTER X.

THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES: PRUDENCE.

"If you see well, you're king of what you see:
Eyesight is having."

"There's a truth of settled laws,
That down the past looms like a great watch-fire."

§ 1. *The Intellectual Virtues.*

Prima facie, Book VI. is an enumeration of intellectual virtues, wisdom and prudence being only two out of many. Closer inspection, however, shows that all the others in reality group themselves round these two, and more particularly that the qualities described in chaps. ix.–xii.—good counsel, intelligence, good sense, cleverness—are rather to be taken as elements in the supreme virtue of prudence than independent forms of excellence. Wisdom and prudence—the Greek *σοφία* and *φρόνησις*—are not therefore two among other forms, but the two types, of intellectual virtue. The difficulty which besets the translator of these words is that of finding terms which will distinguish between them, and at the same time indicate the relation in which they stand to each other as only higher and lower forms of the same excellence. Assuming this ultimate relation, we may express their essential

unity by the English word "wisdom." Raised to its highest power, "wisdom" implies that attitude to life which results from the clear apprehension of those ultimate principles of reality which Plato called the Good. At a lower level it indicates practical sagacity in the conduct of affairs, whether those of the individual or the community. To mark, however, the distinction between these two levels, words are necessary which shall suggest respectively the intellectual and the practical side of wisdom, as so defined. No single English words are adequate to express the required shades of meaning. The nearest approach to the lower virtue is probably given by the traditional translation—"Prudence," in the sense of that practical control over the affairs of life which comes of moral insight. It is more difficult to find an equivalent for the higher. Perhaps the "Divine Wisdom" of the mediæval mystics would best give the sense. If we adopt the more usual translation, "Wisdom," we must understand that the emphasis falls upon the contemplative or philosophical attitude of mind which is the condition of the higher forms of intellectual insight, and with them of happiness.

In accordance with the above definitions we have now to ask—first, how are we to conceive of the distinction between these two "virtues"? secondly, confining ourselves meantime to *φρόνησις*, or prudence, how is it related to what we have hitherto described as moral virtue? thirdly, what preliminary conclusions can we draw as to the relation of the higher virtue of wisdom to the lower?

§ 2. *The Distinction between Prudence and Wisdom.*

[VI. c. i. §§ 4 foll.; vii. §§ 1 foll.]

In the endeavour clearly to differentiate between prudence and wisdom, Aristotle appeals to a psychological distinction between the scientific and the calculative reason (c. i. §§ 4 and 5), which immediately merges in a philosophical distinction between the objects with which they respectively deal. Two features are emphasized as distinctive of the kind of reality which is the object of the calculative reason: (1) it is "contingent," whereas science and philosophy are concerned with "those elements of reality which depend upon unalterable principles" (c. i. § 5); (2) it is multiform (c. viii. § 4), while the objects of the scientific reason are "of the same kind wherever they are found." These distinctions, however, must not be taken too seriously. Pressed to their logical issue, they not only obscure the ultimate unity of the elements of happiness we are here discussing, but render any intelligible account of them impossible.

Taking the first of them, it is quite true that the function of prudence or calculation is to adapt means to end, and that means are apt to present themselves to us under the form of alternative possibilities, *i.e.* contingencies. Yet the forces which we set in operation in seeking to realize an "end," whether they be physical causes or human wills, act according to laws as eternally fixed and unalterable as the stars in their courses, and, if we only knew enough, could be calculated as exactly. Similarly, from the side of the end

or good, it is quite true that the phenomena of life are more complex than those of form or colour, and that, as the history of science has shown, it is more difficult to grasp the idea of the end or function of living beings expressed in such formulæ as survival, adaptation to environment, or the like, than a mathematical definition or a physical analysis. But modern biology leaves us in no doubt that such a definition is possible. Turning to the question of human good, the whole science of Ethics itself proceeds upon the assumption that whatever the apparent diversity of individual goods, they all find their unity in the conception of man as a being whose end consists in the fulfilment of his function as a member of a civilized community. Plato was here nearer the mark in insisting on the fundamental identity of the good in all its forms. Nor does Aristotle himself, when in closer touch with the inner spirit of his own philosophy, differ from him. In the present connexion we cannot help feeling that it would have saved him some embarrassment in the statement of the relation between wisdom and prudence if he had realized more clearly the illusoriness of the above distinctions, and thus left himself free to acknowledge that the practical good of man as itself one of "the elements of reality that depend upon unalterable principles," and indeed the highest of them, has no less a claim than the forms, colours, and motions of bodies to be made the object of philosophical thought (*σοφία*).

We are left, therefore, with a distinction based not on any inherent difference between the degree of

unity and reality to be assigned to the objects of the scientific and calculative reason, but rather on the scope of their respective exercise and the aim they have in view. While the "object" of philosophy is "all time and all reality," the object of prudence is primarily that particular form of reality which we call the practical good of man. Secondly, while the aim of philosophy is primarily to understand the nature of this good and its relation to other forms of reality, *e.g.* truth and beauty, the aim of prudence is to realize it in practice. While, however, they are thus distinguished, we must not forget that they stand in organic connexion with each other, inasmuch as principle and practice, theory and conduct, can never be wholly separated. Fully to realize the meaning of life is an essential condition of complete practical success in it. On the other hand, the true meaning of life—the "unalterable principles" which underlie it—only becomes luminous and convincing in an atmosphere of moral practice. Seeing that the whole of the sixth book aims, as we shall see, at making this fundamental unity of the intellectual virtues clear, it is the more curious that Aristotle should have started in this analysis with a distinction that seems at variance with it.

§ 3. *The Intellectual Elements in Moral Virtue.*

[VI. cc. ix.–xi.]

The discussion of the relation between Prudence and Moral Virtue falls into two parts, the first of

which (cc. ix.–xi.) is really an analysis of the intellectual element in morality, the second (cc. xii. and xiii.) approaches the subject more directly by inquiring what is the use of Prudence, carrying us to a more careful statement of the relation between intellectual ability and moral excellence. Taking the former first, we have here an enumeration of the chief qualities which "tend to centre in the same type of character."

(*a*) The first of these is good counsel. That good counsel is a necessary element in all good conduct follows from what has already been said of conduct as concerned with means and end, and still more definitely from the analysis of the judgment or "syllogism" involved in all volition with which the last chapter made us familiar. The precise connexion between the two conceptions (end of action and syllogistic conclusion) is not at first obvious to us. It will become clearer if we recollect that in Aristotle's view the accomplishment of an end involves a train of reasoning the conclusion of which, *i.e.* the last step in the argument, gives us our means or the first step in action, and similarly the first step in logic, represented by the end to be accomplished in human life, is the last step in practice, viz. the realization of the end. As right reasoning, then, implies a true conclusion from true premises, so good conduct implies good counsel as to means and end alike. As the reasoning may be wrong, either on account of the falsity of the major premise which gives the universal principle, or of the minor and the conclusion which

follows on it, so counsel may fail, either because the end is wrong or the means are mistaken. In the former case we have the man who is cunning but vicious; in the latter, the man who is well-meaning but stupid.* Finally, as all human ends are accomplished in time, we must add as a final condition under this head the intellectual agility which enables a man to perceive the right means within the period that the circumstances permit him for deliberation.

(*b*) Another of the qualities which "tend to centre in the same character" is intelligence, or good intelligence. In its ordinary use the Greek word means the faculty of understanding and appreciating the good suggestion of another. The intelligent man (συνετός) is a "good judge of an argument." This differentiates it from Prudence, or Morality in the highest sense, which, as Aristotle points out, is originative, initiating "policies and schemes of conduct,"† never repeating itself or taking the word of another for what ought to be done. Yet to dwell upon this difference would be misleading, and tend to obscure the very point of the analysis. Intelligence, as the name (σύνεσις) implies, is the power of putting two and two together, of "applying what one knows" to new cases. The origination which is the mark of the truly good man may be something more than

* Grant gives as an example of the latter:

Preservation of health is good;

Abstinence from intellectual labour is preservation of health—

explaining that the result of this syllogism will be the preservation of health but the sacrifice of mental culture.

† See Stewart *in loco*.

this, but, at any rate, it involves this: before he can originate he must be able to apply. Moreover, there is a kind of originality, which just consists in the power of applying in new and unexpected ways principles already acknowledged. The political or social reformer, for instance, is an originator, yet when we analyze the changes which he advocates, we usually find them to be merely the application to new cases of principles which society has already admitted. Slave emancipation was merely the application to the negro of principles already recognized among white men; factory legislation only extended to the workshop principles of health and decency already acknowledged at home and in the school. Even private morality consists, to a great extent, in the successful application of general principles to particular cases. Perhaps it is not going too far to say that half the moral obliquity in the world consists in failing to apply on Monday what one has admitted upon Sunday, the other half in failing to see that what applies to A applies also to B.

(*c*) The last of the qualities mentioned in these sections is *γνώμη*, which Grant translates "considerateness," Peters, less happily, "judgment." To understand the relation of this quality, so hastily described in the text, to morality in general, we must recall some of the conclusions already reached. All morality, we have seen, is social. The common distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding virtues is misleading. As a matter of fact, all conduct operates in a social medium, and necessarily affects others as well

as one's self. Rightness and wrongness in conduct, therefore, does not depend on its being either self-regarding or other-regarding, but upon its bearing on the life of the whole community, on its being whole-regarding—"wholesome." This involves a power of detachment from particular interests, whether our own or others', and of assuming the attitude which Adam Smith describes as that of the "impartial spectator." It is this power that Aristotle has in view in his remarks on γνώμη. I have translated it by "sense," but we should not be far wrong if we translated it straight away "*common* sense." It is the power of instinctively perceiving what is required in the interests of the community. This general description is illustrated by the examples which Aristotle himself gives of its exercise. One of the most striking occasions for this impartiality is when an adjustment of social claims requires to be made contrary to the letter of the law, *i.e.* where there is a conflict between law and justice, and appeal is made to equity. Equity is the "correction of the law,"* and it has its basis in nothing more recondite than the kind of sense we are speaking of. "Sense," says Aristotle, is "the faculty of coming to a right decision on matters of equity," and equity itself is elsewhere defined as merely the application of good sense to practice.† Another of the typical occasions on which there is call for the exercise of

* See *Ethics*, V. i. 3. Cp. *Rhet.* I. xiii. (Note F), which ought to be read in connexion with the present passage.

† "The man of sense forms his own judgment; the equitable man acts on the judgment thus formed" (*M. M.* ii. 2).

this faculty is when we conceive *ourselves* to have been wronged. The man of good sense is here the man who can put himself in the place of the wrong-doer, and "makes every allowance" for him. This "allowance" is what the Greeks called συγγνώμη, usually translated "forgiveness," but really "sympathy" or "common sense."

It seems hardly necessary to call attention to the educational bearings of these sections. If the good life is the purposeful life, and the relation of means to purpose follows the lines of the practical syllogism —if, further, the good life is the consistent life, and implies the faculty of applying a general principle in detail, the ordinary distinction between intellectual and moral training is seen to be illusory.

Similarly, if the good life is the "equitable" life, we have in the remarks upon "sense" some suggestions that may be useful for the proper understanding of the current educational theory of the relation of imagination and sympathy to practice. It has become a commonplace to emphasize the training of imagination and sympathy as factors in conduct. The Aristotelian doctrine, however, goes beyond this, and indicates the precise kind of sympathy that is here required. Thus it is important to note that it is not merely the power of feeling *with* others in the sense of responding to their feelings, but the power of feeling *for* them, that is here meant. The infection of feeling —the vague "sensibility" which was the fashion in the earlier part of the century—is one thing; the power of putting one's self in the place of another and

sharing his ends is quite another. But, secondly, it is the power of sympathizing with the *moral* element in another's ends. It is possible to sympathize with bad ends as well as with good ones, and be all the worse for such a power of sympathy. Our feelings for "others" have therefore to be checked and regulated by a feeling for the common good—our "sensibility" by common sense.

§ 4. *Prudence and Moral Virtue.*

[VI. cc. xii. and xiii.]

The relation between Prudence and Moral Virtue is arrived at in the course of the reply which Aristotle gives to the question what is the *use* of insight. The first part of the discussion refers to both forms of intellectual virtue; the second part is confined to Prudence. The reply in the former consists in showing that utility is here a false standard. What is useful is desired for the sake of something else—that which it is useful for. Prudence and Wisdom cannot be useful in this sense, for they are elements in that from which everything else derives utility, viz. happiness or perfection. There is indeed a sense in which we may say that they are useful. We may distinguish between the possession and the exercise of these qualities, and looking to the former may hold it to be useful. But we must be careful in this case to remember that by useful we here mean not something which is used *for* something else, being itself different from it, as *e.g.* medicine is useful for health, but something which already is

potentially that which it is useful for, as good condition is useful for the enjoyment of good health.

Aristotle, however, seems to feel that in this reply he does not really come to close grips with the problem of the true relation between Prudence and Moral Virtue, and, making a new start, proposes "to carry the question a step further back" by inquiring what precisely is implied in the latter. Our previous discussion has shown that there are two sides or elements in every good act. In the first place, it is what ought to be done, what "may be expected of a good man;" and, secondly, it is the conscious adaptation of means to a good end. But the power of adapting means to end is what we call natural ability, which stands to Prudence as natural virtue in general stands to virtue proper. This gives us the required clue. For just as the natural virtues require to be moulded and regulated by social habits in order that they may become sources of usefulness to society,* so "this eye of the soul" requires the transforming influence of good training in order that it may become a useful social quality.† After illustrating the view of the nature of true moral virtue, to which he is thus led, by a criticism of the Socratic doctrine on the one hand and common opinion on the other (which he treats as exaggerations of opposite sides of the truth), Aristotle sums up his reply to the main problem in the words: "It is impossible to be good in the proper sense without prudence, or prudent without goodness" (xiii. § 6).

* See p. 70. † See Note I.

In the answer to our question as thus stated, it would seem at first sight as though, instead of a solution, Aristotle had given us a paradox—as though, in fact, the discussion ends where it ought to have begun, in a clear statement of the problem. The source, it appears, of true insight or prudence is virtue; but if we ask whence virtue itself comes, the answer is, from insight or prudence. Without virtue, then, no prudence—without prudence, no virtue. But the solution of this circle—so far as solution in the ordinary sense is possible—has already been given: it has been, in fact, the aim of the whole of the *Ethics* up to this point to give it. We have only to gather the elements of it together and re-state them in the particular form required. As the true understanding of this paradox is perhaps the best test of a sound ethical philosophy, it may be useful to conclude this section by attempting such a re-statement.

1. Virtue is the habit of doing what is right—as Aristotle puts it, of doing "all that may be expected of a good man." This is true; indeed, to readers of the *Ethics*, a truism. But it is very easy to miss the precise limits within which it is true. Thus, it is easy so to emphasize the influence of habit, training, tradition, upon the view a man takes of what is morally good and desirable as to throw the function of individual reason and judgment into the shade. It is one of the evidences of the sanity of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle that it does not fall into this exaggeration. The chief danger to the Greek community came from the side of able unscrupulous

leaders, imperfectly imbued with the moral tradition which the State embodied. In Themistocles, Alcibiades, Callias, and Pausanias, Athens and Sparta had had fatal experience of this type of character. The Greek philosophers were greatly impressed with its dangers, the *Republic* of Plato being in reality the sketch of a system of education and polity specially designed to meet them. Yet even in Plato the whole course of education proceeds on the assumption that morality which is merely conventional is "a shadow and slavish quality," and that the supreme aim of the legislator is the development of the highest powers of reason and intelligence in the future citizens. Modern writers * have not always succeeded in avoiding the pitfall here indicated, and in their eagerness to establish the influence of authority and tradition have sometimes lent encouragement to the view that the foundations of moral belief are external to a man, and that reason and insight make no substantive addition to life and happiness.

2. Virtue is adaptation of means to end. It therefore involves the exercise of individual reason—is, in fact, a matter of private judgment. Here also it is easy to go wrong, and to lay so much stress on this side of the truth as to make it appear that emancipation, enlightenment, "illumination," is the only, or at least the chief, requisite for life and happiness. This is what the Rousseau-Godwin school in modern times has succeeded in doing. Among the contemporaries of Aristotle we know that there was a school of thinkers

* Of whom Burke is a favourable example.

(whom he identifies with "Socrates") who leaned to this heresy. Here again it is evidence of the sanity of the great thinkers, amongst them probably Socrates himself, that they clearly saw the place of moral habit as an essential condition of enlightened judgment.

Following them, we must endeavour to give their due weight to both these elements in the truth. Not only must both be held *at the same time:* both must be held *in union.* Education is a process of illumination. It is necessary to have one's eyes opened to see the meaning of social ends. Those who mean well, and endeavour to conform to tradition or follow authority without seeing clearly what the good is which they mean, make the bigots and obscurantists of an age, and may under particular circumstances be just as great a danger to social order as those who see well enough the meaning of their actions, but mean badly. On the other hand, in order that one may see clearly what social good requires, it is necessary to have appropriated the reason embodied in the tradition, and be familiar as a matter of practice with its operation. In this respect moral truth is not really different from scientific, and may be illustrated from it. People sometimes speak of the truths of science as though the apprehension of them were merely a matter of intellectual grasp. But every teacher knows that to understand and realize a scientific principle the student requires long training and practical familiarity with the scope and method of the particular science within which it falls. In the same manner, and all the more because the

end itself is ultimately a state of the will, it is true that what we call a moral principle can only be understood in the light of the systematic effort to realize it in practice.

§ 5. *Prudence and Wisdom.*

[VI. c. xiii. § 8.]

The question of the relation between Prudence and Wisdom can only be fully treated after the discussion of the latter. The answer to it is, however, to a certain extent anticipated in the last section of the passage before us, in which Aristotle meets the objection that the above account of Prudence, by assigning to it the supreme place in the state as the maker and administrator of law, places Wisdom and Philosophy in the position of subjects. This, he says, is wholly to misunderstand, indeed to reverse their true relation to each other. The legislator may be said to be master over the citizens, and to give directions how they are to conduct themselves as he gives directions for the conduct of a religious festival. But just as in the latter case the directions are issued, not for the guidance of the gods, but with the view of providing for their worship, so the laws are made, not with a view to regulating and defining the course of thought and philosophy, but with a view to providing for their exercise. In other words, the function of Prudence is to organize the resources of civilization so as to make them available for the life of Thought. Aristotle would not have denied that there was a sense in

which the opposite was true, and that thought and philosophy might be "useful" by contributing to man's control over nature and so strengthening and extending the material basis of happiness. What he here insists upon, and rightly insists upon, is that their "utility" does not end here, but that they constitute a substantive element in happiness itself—are, in fact, the soul of which all the other elements of happiness are the body. This twofold aspect is well brought out by Professor Stewart when he says: "To have this ideal" (the ideal of a complete life), "it is not, indeed, necessary to be one's self a 'philosopher' or 'thinker,' or actually to lead the separate 'contemplative life,' strictly so called; but it is necessary to live in a city which has thinkers and is regulated for the sake of them." From this point of view, thought and philosophy are a necessity in civilized communities, not primarily because they are of use in providing for its material needs, but because they represent an element without which the moral and intellectual qualities which are its most precious possession must fail to reach their full development.*

* Cp. what Dr. Bosanquet says of art, philosophy, and religion: "Art, philosophy, and religion, though in a sense the very life-blood of society, are not and could not be directly fashioned to meet the needs and uses of the multitude, and their aim is not in that sense 'social.' They should rather be regarded as a continuation within, and founded upon the commonwealth of the work which the commonwealth begins in realizing human nature; as fuller utterances of the same universal self which the 'general will' reveals in more precarious forms; and as in the same sense implicit in the consciousness of all, being an inheritance which is theirs so far as they can take possession of it" (*Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 333).

CHAPTER XI.

WISDOM, OR PHILOSOPHY.

"When I say that the government is best under which men lead a peaceable life, I mean that life of man which consists not only in the circulation of the blood and other properties common to all animals, but whose chief part is reason, and the true life and excellence of the mind."

SPINOZA.

§ 1. *Definition of Philosophy.*

[VI. c. i. § 5.]

WE have already seen that Wisdom, or Philosophy, is concerned with those elements of reality which depend upon unalterable principles, and is defined as "scientific knowledge of the most precious things, with the crown of perfection upon it." Before going on further to discuss the peculiar place that is claimed for it in human life and happiness, it is necessary to try to define more precisely what we are to understand by the term.

Assuming that the scientific as opposed to the calculative reason has for its object the unalterable principles of reality,* how can we distinguish Philosophy from other kinds of scientific knowledge? Or, to

* In what sense this is true has been seen p. 139 above.

put it otherwise, what are we to understand by "the most precious things" of which we are told Philosophy is the knowledge? The very form of the question seems to suggest that Science and Philosophy have different objects, and when he is dealing with the precise difference between them Aristotle tends to dwell upon this distinction. In this spirit he differentiates, in a well-known passage in the Metaphysics,* two kinds of knowledge, one of which busies itself with the investigation of what is changeable and incomplete, *i.e.* contained as an attribute in something else, the other with what is eternal and self-contained. The former kind is what we should understand by science, falling, according to Aristotle, into two main divisions, viz. mathematics and physics. There is, however, in Aristotle a wider sense of the term philosophy, according to which it is taken as a description of knowledge, or theory in general, falling into the three great groups of mathematical, physical, and theological or first philosophy. According to this view, these sciences represent rather stages in the deepening of the knowledge of reality which reaches its furthest point in that which is *par excellence* philosophy, than fields distinct from one another or from philosophy itself. It is in accordance with this view of the scope of philosophy that Aristotle at the beginning of the *Metaphysics*, in enumerating the marks that distinguish philosophical from other kinds of knowledge, notes that it is concerned with every

* *Metaphysics* K 7; cf. Stewart, ii. p. 55. Wallace's *Outlines of the Philosophy of Aristotle*, p. 23.

form of reality and differs from scientific knowledge in the ordinary sense in its greater abstruseness, exactness, thoroughness, and disinterestedness. These two points of view are reconciled with one another by noting that while philosophy is distinguished from mathematical and physical science in being concerned with the eternal and self-contained, we are not to suppose that the "things" with which it is concerned form a class by themselves. Philosophy is concerned with the reality that underlies the world about us, not with any metaphysical realities beyond it. It is therefore not so much a separate science, with a particular field of its own, as a particular way of treating that world of reality which is the object of all science.

It is quite true that Aristotle sometimes speaks of God and human reason in its highest form as realities "separable" from the rest of the world, and in a passage we have already considered he seems to regard the stars of heaven as in a special sense the objects of "philosophy." But we must be careful how we take such passages. Without entangling ourselves in the metaphysical difficulties they suggest, it may be pointed out that Aristotle has no doubt in his own mind that the nature of the ultimate realities which we call God and Reason is discoverable only by the analysis of the particular forms of reality which we see about us, and, secondly, that the stars of heaven have the place of pre-eminence assigned to them as objects of philosophical thought just because they are conceived of by Aristotle, in common with Plato, as representing in a special sense

the source of the reason and intelligence which is the ultimate principle of reality in the world.*

Returning to the passage before us, the reader will now be prepared to understand that while it is the narrower sense of the term which is probably here uppermost in Aristotle's mind, it would be a mistake so to interpret it as to exclude all reference to thought and science in general.

§ 2. *Apparent Exaggeration in Aristotle's Doctrine.*

Even in the light of this wider interpretation of the term, however, these sections strike us at first as somewhat paradoxical and exaggerated in the importance they assign to science and philosophy as a source of happiness. We have hitherto followed the argument without much difficulty. Happiness, we have seen, consists in the excellent discharge of human function. This excellence, we have further seen, has two sides, according as we consider it to consist in a habitual attitude of the will to the calls of life, or in insight into the meaning of life. In the one aspect we call it moral: in the other, intellectual virtue. Uniting them, we define true happiness as that of the intelligent citizen who loyally accepts the responsibilities of his station and lives to the honour of his country.

But here is something which it is more difficult to bring into line with ordinary moral conceptions. The spirit of sobriety with which the argument has hitherto

* See Grant, *op. cit.* i. p. 286.

been conducted seems to be abandoned, and we are asked to recognize a still higher kind of happiness in a life which is the opposite of that just described in every essential particular. In the first place, it is exclusive. Not only is it a life that implies special endowments and considerable leisure, but it is one of comparative isolation, in which even friendship plays an insignificant part, and the truly happy man seems to be he who "stands most alone." Secondly, it is unrelated to the ordinary business and calls of life, which are conceived of rather as a disturbance than as opportunities for the realization of happiness. Thirdly, instead of giving us a deeper hold of mortal life, and putting us in closer touch with humanity, it consists in the endeavour to put off our mortality through the development of the faculty of reason, which is apparently conceived of as something superhuman.

It is true that this paradox does not originate with Aristotle, having been inherited by him from Plato, who had already given a somewhat mystical character to the highest happiness. But there is a tone of sobriety in all that Plato says in this connexion, which for the nonce we seem to miss in Aristotle. "Aristotle," says Grant,* "is less delicate and reverent than Plato in his mode of speaking of human happiness, especially as attained by the philosopher. In Plato there seems often, if not always, present a sense of the weakness of the individual as contrasted with the eternal and the divine. If Plato requires

* *Op. cit.* i. p. 215.

philosophy to make morality, he also always infuses morality into philosophy. The philosopher in his pictures does not triumph over the world, but rather is glad to seize on 'some tradition,' 'like a stray plank,' to prevent his being lost; he feels that his philosophy on earth is a 'knowing in part.' Aristotle, on the contrary, rather over-represents the strength of philosophy. And in his picture of the happiness of the philosopher we cannot but feel that there is over-much elation, and something that requires toning down." Yet all the art of Plato cannot conceal the gap between the life of the ordinary citizen and of the philosopher, and Aristotle's bluntness only makes explicit what we have already half realized in Plato.

§ 3. *Explanations.*

The difficulty which these sections thus suggest has been met by commentators in different ways. Professor Stewart takes the heroic course of denying its existence. We must not suppose, he says, in commenting on c. vii. §§ 4–7, that the σοφός, or wise man, as described here, *exists as an individual* to bear away the prize of actual happiness from the δίκαιος, or just man. The contemplative life is not a separate life co-ordinate with the political, but a spirit which penetrates and ennobles the latter. Philosophy, according to this view, does not separate the philosopher from practical life, but merely prevents him from being absorbed in its details. Similarly, the "leisure"

that is spoken of must be taken to consist, not in "an impossible immunity from the 'interruptions' of practical life," but in "the quiet of a well-regulated mind." Professor Stewart admits that there are passages in which the contemplative and the practical life are contrasted as those of the student or savant and the public man respectively, but he maintains that in these sections Aristotle wishes to call attention to the immaterial essence of life—of man's life as a whole as distinguished from its concrete manifestations in individuals.

Attractive as this explanation is, the language in these sections, as in other descriptions of the "theoretic life," seems to prove that the writer has in view a special kind of life rather than a spirit which should permeate the whole of life. Both in Plato and Aristotle there is an unmistakable note of dissatisfaction with the scope and opportunities of the practical life, leading on to an attempt to mark out a higher field of exercise for the human reason, in which the discords and limitations that meet us in the lower have disappeared. So far from desiring to ignore this feature of their philosophy, or put a gloss upon it, I should wish to emphasize it as a proof of their greatness. There is a narrowness in the ideal of the practical life as commonly conceived which renders it unfit to be taken as coterminous with complete human happiness. Man, it is true, is a "political animal." He is a dweller in cities, and has elective affinities with his neighbours at every point of his life. When there is any danger of cutting him off from

these "organic filaments," and treating him as a mere individual, it is important to emphasize this side of his nature. He is this, at least. But he is also something more. He is a dweller in the *world*, and has affinities with all time and all reality, with the ages past and future, with the stars of heaven, and with the Spirit

> "Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns."

These, too, as well as the mortal things of human fellowship, touch him. In knowing them he comes to know himself. But, further, in the practical life as known to the Greeks, there were defects which rendered it even more inadequate as a field for the higher sort of human effort. If, as we have come to see, it is impossible to confine human sympathies within any limits narrower than those of humanity itself, no loyalty to the mutual services required by a community of a few thousand privileged persons can compensate for the essential imperfections of such an ideal. May we not, therefore, be allowed to see, in the longing regard which the Greek philosophers turned to the contemplative life, evidence of a lurking discontent with current ideals, and to find in passages like the present a more or less conscious protest, not only against the spirit of worldliness or philistinism, contenting itself with a narrow practicality, but also against the spirit of Hellenism, limiting the scope of human sympathies within the bounds of a single nationality? Accepting this view for the present, we are able to do justice to

the truth contained in the Aristotelian conception, and at the same time to recognize its limitations.

§ 4. *The Sanity of Aristotle's Conception.*

We shall best realize the inherent sanity of Aristotle's conception of the higher blessedness if we compare it with other forms which the protest against the narrowness of popular ideals has taken.

(i.) Plato and Aristotle were not alone in feeling the narrowness of the existing social order. Some of the contemporary and even the preceding schools of philosophy had recognized it even more explicitly than either of these two great teachers, and were already feeling their way towards something more universal. Probably the first actual protests against the exclusiveness of Hellenism came from the followers of Socrates who were known as the Cynics,* but it was in the teaching of the Stoics that the idea of a citizenship of the world gained fullest expression.† For the picture of the Good Citizen, as sketched in the great philsophers, these schools substituted definitely that of the Wise Man. It is true that the Stoics did not go so far as their Epicurean contemporaries, whose watchword, Λάθε βιώσας ("Court the shade"), sufficiently indicated their attitude towards the busy life of the public man; but there is a strong tendency even among the Stoics to represent the philosopher as one to whom the limitations of the actual state were

* See Zeller's *Socrates and the Socratic Schools*, p. 231.

† Zeller's *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics*, p. 308.

unendurable.* Some of them seem even to have held that adherence to the life of "philosophy" absolved from the obligation to observe the decencies and conventions of ordinary society; from which it was only a small step to the interpretation of "wisdom" itself as consisting in a merely negative attitude to all that is valuable in civilization, including science and philosophy themselves. In contrast to these exaggerations, Aristotle's picture, in endeavouring to hold the balance between the citizen and the philosopher, first, by representing the life of good citizenship as a means to the life of leisure or philosophy, and, second, by identifying the latter with that highest form of intellectual activity which is the end and soul of civilization—is common-sense itself.

(ii.) How sane is Aristotle's plea regarded as a protest against the absorption of human energies in secular business, and the ever-present tendency to forget the end in the means of life, will appear if we compare it with other ideals which have been accepted at various times and places in the supposed interest of the spiritual part of man. Monasticism, both in the East and in the West, is such an ideal. Yet how great the difference! Seeking refuge from the imperfections and limitations of the worldly life, the human spirit here finds it in seclusion from the ordinary interests and activities of mankind. While recognizing that the higher life must be found in a state of heightened consciousness, Western monastics have held that preparation for it consisted, not in the

* *Ibid.* p. 305, n. 4.

effort more fully to realize the import of our present life, but partly in a destructive physical discipline, partly in the contemplation of the unknown and unknowable. The Eastern ideal, delicate and beautiful as it appears in the higher forms of Buddhism, has always tended to represent the end itself as a form of passivity, and even vacuity, of mind following upon the negation of desire. Contrasted with these ideas, Wisdom, as conceived by Aristotle, presents two features which are the marks of truth. In the first place, it is activity, and activity of the highest element in man. To possess this wisdom is thus to heighten, instead of to depress, the sense of living. Secondly, it is a deepening of the present, and not merely the preparation for a future life. It is true that Aristotle speaks of it as a putting off of our mortality, but the immortality which he has in view consists not in an other-world life foreign to the present, but in the power of seeing the eternal principles or laws of which our own world is the expression.

§ 5. *Theoria as the True Understanding of Life.*

The fact remains that Aristotle seems unduly to confine the scope of contemplation to what we should understand by science and philosophy, thus causing a twofold difficulty in the gap he leaves, on the one hand, between the practical and the theoretic life, and on the other, between the Greek and the Christian ideal. Even philosophy he seems to take in a limited sense, as in a former passage he has expressly told us that

human life itself cannot be included among the highest objects of human thought. We have already had occasion to point out the effect of this limitation. Had Aristotle recognized more clearly that the good life is itself one of the "most precious things" of the world, he would have left at least one clear link of connexion between the practical and the contemplative life, for we could then have understood, from one side at least, how "theory" may react upon our every-day life by correcting its ideals and vindicating its ends. Even so, however, the difficulty would remain that, as contrasted with the Christian ideal, access to the highest happiness is through the strait and narrow gate of intellectual attainment and abundant leisure.

This last difficulty is one which cannot, from the nature of the case, be wholly removed; yet we can go some distance in the direction of meeting it if we notice a further extension of the meaning of the Greek *theoria*, which, although clearly not explicitly present in the writer's mind, yet was never very far from the thoughts of the Greeks in this connexion. Besides the more technical sense in which it is used of more recondite studies, the word has the wider meaning of contemplation in general, and especially the contemplation that is directed to beauty in every form. It is in this sense that, in a passage already referred to, the biographer of Pythagoras uses the word. The highest kind of happiness, which consists in "the contemplation of the fairest things," is there compared to the object which the nobler class of spectators at

the Olympic games set before themselves, viz. "to *see* the country and fine works of art and every excellence of word and deed." That Aristotle himself does not suggest this extension of the idea seems the more surprising, as he has already shown (c. vii. 1, § 2) that popular language itself in the use of the word "wise" bears witness to the connexion between the insight of the painter and sculptor and that of the philosopher. We know, moreover, from the well-known passage in the *Poetics* where he compares poetry with history, that he was prepared to claim for the former that it was "more serious and more philosophical" than the latter, on the express ground that it reveals to us not individual facts but universal principles of human action. If we ask the reason why, with so natural an extension of the word so close at hand, he here limits himself to the narrower meaning, the explanation is no doubt partly to be looked for, as Professor Stewart suggests, in the partiality of the thinker and philosopher for his own favourite pursuit, but partly also in the fact that at this point in his argument the truth he is anxious to emphasize is that human life is incomplete unless it leads us to the conscious apprehension of principles that are universal and necessary. According to the view which he shared with Plato, it was in the study of philosophy, of which mathematics, physics, and theology, including astronomy, were parts, that these features of reality stood most clearly out and were most unmistakable. It was through it, therefore, that the human mind was led most directly to the point

of view from which it could see all things *sub specie aeternitatis* and reach, for the moment at least, the supreme goal of life. To these explanations we ought, perhaps, to add the peculiar Greek view of the work of the poet and artist which Aristotle shared with his contemporaries. Both by Plato and Aristotle the poet and artist are apt to be regarded as, at best, the professional exponents of truths which they imperfectly realize. They are rather the unconscious instruments than the free exponents of the Divine Spirit in the world. The "contemplation," on the other hand, which both Plato and Aristotle have in view when they speak of Philosophy, requires a detachment of mind which they conceived of as impossible to those who made art or literature a profession, and as only to be found in the pursuit of truth for its own sake. Yet that Aristotle has no intention of excluding art and literature, but holds, on the contrary, that when used as sources of enjoyment and not as a profession, they minister directly to the higher life, we see clearly from the well-known passage in the *Politics* which treats of the place of the arts in education.* Aristotle there takes it for granted that art and literature minister to the higher form of happiness and are the proper occupations of the life of leisure, treating the ordinary school curriculum, in a few suggestive strokes, as a preparation, not so much for the business as for the enjoyment of life.

* *Politics*, VIII., especially c. iii. § 3 foll., which the student interested in education would do well to read in connexion with the sections before us. See Note G.

Applying this extension of the term to the present passage, we reach a point of view from which it can be seen that there is in Aristotle's mind a closer connexion between the theoretic and the practical life than that indicated by the text. If "philosophy" be taken to include art and literature, it is impossible to regard it as merely a new and higher occupation which practical life subserves by furnishing the necessary external conditions. For art and poetry are neither something wholly out of relation to life nor yet a mere imitation of it. They mirror life, but they mirror it—and this Aristotle was perhaps the first to teach—at its best, and are thus, to use a modern phrase, in their essence a "criticism of life." Their function is to raise life to a higher power by teaching us what it really is—what it has in it to become.

It cannot, of course, be maintained that any extension of the Greek *theoria* which it is legitimate to suggest will suffice to bridge completely the gulf between Aristotelian and modern conceptions. Yet two things remain to be said. First, though there was a time—and not very long ago—when the life of leisure as above conceived seemed an impossible ideal for the great mass of mankind, in these latter days a great hope has sprung up that this will not always be so. Already, by the socialization of the means of enjoyment in science, art, and literature, this ideal may be said to have been brought within measurable distance. Secondly, having acknowledged that the deeper insight which, stripped of technicalities, consists in the recognition and acceptance of eternal laws underlying

reality in any of its manifold forms, may come through art and culture if only the heart is pure, as well as through philosophy in the technical sense, there is less difficulty in going a step further and asking why it may not also come through life itself under the same condition. In making this suggestion we may seem to have left Aristotle far behind. Yet in the sphere of practice, Aristotle has himself taught us that a man arrives at a knowledge of what is truly good through the discipline of good actions. It is only an extension of this principle to recognize that through a still fuller acceptance of the ends of life, prudence may pass into a still higher wisdom, the insight of the practical man into that of the philosopher, vision of Good in the City into vision of Good in the World.

CHAPTER XII.

FRIENDSHIP.

"Nature doth presume that how many men there are in the world, so many gods, as it were, there are, or at least ought to be, towards men."

HOOKER.

"The good which a man seeks and loves, he will love with greater constancy if he sees that others love it too."

SPINOZA.

§ 1. *The Place of Friendship in Aristotle's Scheme of the Virtues.*

THE place which Friendship is intended to occupy in Aristotle's scheme of the virtues is not at once obvious. We have already heard of a virtue of Friendliness, which is defined as the mean with regard to pleasantness in life generally—the man who is "sweet and pleasant in the right way" being the friendly man.* But clearly something far more than this is here intended. Moreover, although in the introductory sentences Aristotle speaks of Friendship as a virtue, or at least implying virtue, we are clearly not intended to take this seriously. We have left the discussion of the "virtues" behind us, nor is there any attempt made to bring friendship into line with the rest by treating it as a mean.

* II. vii. § 13; see p. 245.

Yet if we look somewhat further we shall see that all that is said in these chapters stands in a very close relation indeed to the main subject of the *Ethics*, and forms the natural sequel to the discussion of the Intellectual Virtues, and especially of Prudence or Moral Insight, after which it comes in the text. In discussing Prudence, we saw that man's highest practical good is realized in the life of the citizen who not only reflects but *understands* the moral order of which he is a part. How is this understanding to be attained? Knowledge such as can be imparted by teaching we have seen is of little or no avail. The life of contemplation or reflection, which might be supposed to lead to it, is only possible as a development of this earlier form of wisdom, which it therefore presupposes. Moral insight must spring, if it springs at all, from moral experience—from faithfulness to the actual requirements of the moral life. So much we know, but we may go on to ask for some more precise account of the kind of experience by which, under the conditions of ordinary life, this moral awakening may be expected to take place. Whence in detail this birth into the higher knowledge, this more vivid sense of the spirit's life?

The chapters before us are really an answer to this question. So far as it is possible to fix on any one principle to which may be assigned the function of mediating between conventional obedience to law and true moral insight, that principle is Friendship. To explain how it does so is the object of Books VIII. and IX., the conclusion of which may here be summed

up in a word. (1) The interchange of social service when suffused with private affection comes home to us as a part of our real life in a way it cannot when it takes place between strangers. Here, as elsewhere,

"Love lends a precious seeing to the soul."

(2) A friend is a second self, and by holding the mirror up to nature enables us to realize more fully what we ourselves truly are. In these two ways, first (to repeat) by offering a field where the virtues appear with the glow of feeling upon them, and therefore at their best; secondly, by putting us at a point of view from which we can appreciate their true beauty and value, Friendship has its place defined as the *mise en scène*—to use Professor Stewart's happy phrase—of the practical reason.

§ 2. *The Natural Roots of Friendship.*

[VIII. c. i. § 3.]

The reader is probably familiar, at least in outline, with the Platonic conception of Friendship, which has in fact passed into the currency of ordinary thought and proverb. Its main features are to be gathered from the popular dialogues—the *Lysis*, *Symposium*, *Phædrus*, *Republic*. It would appear at first, indeed, as though there were little connexion between the glow and mysticism of these dialogues and the chapters before us, in which, with all their beauty and underlying enthusiasm, we seem to have the essence of common sense. Yet in all its essential features Aristotle's teaching on this subject is the same as Plato's.

He commences by noting that the principle of friendship has its roots in the natural instinct of kinship, showing itself even in the lower animals, in the attachment not only of parent to offspring, but of members of the same species to one another. The view that man is by nature the friend of man, the exact contrary, it will be noted, of that of Hobbes,* which has been the starting-point of so much of our modern political philosophy, had already been stated by Plato, who found the deepest form of it in the attachment of the opposite sexes and the family affection that flows from it. Plato, however, had gone further, and made the characteristic suggestion that this "mystery of love" has its real roots in the desire of self-perpetuation, or, as he expresses it, of immortality. "Marvel not at this," says Diotima to Socrates, "if you believe that love is of the immortal, as we have already admitted; for here again, and on the same principle too, the mortal nature is seeking as far as is possible to be everlasting and immortal, and this is only to be attained by generation, because the new is always left in the place of the old. . . . And in this way, Socrates, the mortal body, or mortal anything, partakes of immortality; but the immortal in another way. Marvel not, then, at the love which all men have of their offspring, for that universal love and interest is for the sake of immortality."† Applying this principle to

* *Homo homini lupus.*

† *Symposium*, 207 and 208 (Jowett's tr. is used with slight alterations in these quotations).

friendship proper, Plato finds an illustration of it in the great historic acts of friendship. "Do you imagine," continues Diotima, "that Alcestis would have died on behalf of Admetus, or Achilles to do honour to Patroclus, or your own Codrus to preserve the kingdom for his sons, if they had not imagined that the memory of their virtues which is still retained among us would be immortal? Nay, I am persuaded that all men do all things for the sake of the glorious fame of immortal virtue; and the better they are, the more they desire it, for they are ravished with the desire of the immortal."

§ 3. *Friendship as the Basis of Political Union.*

[VIII. c. i. § 4.]

It is only a further extension of the same idea in Plato when it is explained that love or friendship so understood is the principle by which States are founded and perpetuated. Thus it is pointed out in the passage from which the above quotations are taken, that while the animals, and man so far as he is animal, find immortality in the transmission of their bodily forms, the human soul finds it in the transmission of its own character and actions. Thus it is that great legislators, such as Solon and Lycurgus, have been moved by the desire to raise up a spiritual seed who shall hand on, not only their name and fame, but that form of wisdom "which is concerned with the ordering of states or families." It is, however, in the *Republic* that Plato recognizes in greatest detail

the significance of friendship as the bond of union in society. The whole system of social and political organization which is there sketched has indeed for its single object the creation of a spirit of friendship among the citizens, and the regulation of those forms of it upon which the future of the state depends.*

Aristotle is only following in the same lines when he emphasizes the importance of friendship as a bond of civic life (VIII. c. i. § 4). He even seems to go a step further. While Plato had insisted that friendship of the right sort could only develop upon a basis of law and justice, Aristotle seems to suggest that it may be a substitute for them. "If citizens be friends, there is no need of justice; whereas if they are just they still need friendship as well." Students of the history of Greek philosophy have even seen in these words an anticipation of the Epicurean philosophy of the next generation, in which this step was actually taken, and "Societies of Friends" substituted for legal and political associations. But this is very far from Aristotle's meaning, as is subsequently made clear in c. ix., which must be taken along with what is here said.

In the latter passage it is shown that friendship tends to follow the line of the various modes in which the citizens group themselves for social purposes, and that, in addition to the division of friendship into different kinds according to the "object" aimed at, we have another according to the social function it subserves. Aristotle does not propose to substitute the

* See especially *Rep.* V. 462 foll.

subjective principle of private friendship for more "objective" bonds of union. These rest upon human needs as essential as that of friendship itself. The sentence in chapter i. is only Aristotle's way of saying that no system of law and politics, however perfect in theory, can work in practice which is not the expression of the personal good-will of the citizens to one another. Even business "contracts," although usually supposed to lie outside the sphere of sentiment, depend for their due fulfilment upon feelings of friendship and co-operation, which have their source in an underlying sense that the parties to the bargain are something more to one another than contractors in a money transaction, and have an interest in a common good which is not exhausted by it.*

§ 4. *Friendship as a Means of Individual Perfection.*

[IX. c. ix. §§ 1 foll.]

But friendship is not only the bond of social union, it is also the bond of individual perfection. It is in the development of this point that the inwardness of Aristotle's doctrine, and its essential agreement with Plato's, comes most fully into view.

We have seen how, according to Plato, friendship has its roots in the love of a man for himself, and the consequent desire for immortality. But there is a deeper longing still in every man, of which this desire of self-perpetuation is only a reflection. It is not really himself that he desires, but good. "You

* On the function of justice in the State, see Note A, *fin.*

hear people say that lovers are seeking for the half of themselves; but I say that they are seeking neither for the half nor for the whole, unless the half or the whole be also a good. And they will cut off their own hands and feet and cast them away if they are evil, for they love them not because they are their own, but because they are good; and dislike them not because they are another's, but because they are evil. There is nothing which men love but the good." * But there is no true good but goodness and beauty, and the question that is always uppermost in Plato's mind is how a man is to be trained in the love of these. His answer, as is well known, is: through the love or friendship of companions whose souls are good and beautiful. Attracted to them at first by some accidental or superficial quality such as physical beauty, the soul is led on from beauty of form to beauty of action, and from beauty of action to beauty of character and ideas, and finally to understand what beauty itself means. "The true order of going or being led to the things of love," he says, in a passage which sums up the whole of his teaching on this head, "is for a man to use the beauties of earth as steps along which he mounts upwards for the sake of that other beauty, going from one to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair actions, and from fair actions to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is." †

* *Symposium*, 205. † *Ibid.* 211.

Stripped of its mysticism and "flamboyancy," we have essentially the same doctrine in the sections before us. Aristotle develops what he has to say upon the ethical function of friendship in the form of an answer to the question whether the happy man needs friends (IX. c. ix.): if happiness consists in being provided with all good things, what is there which the happy man lacks that a friend can give? to say that he needs friends is to say that his happiness is incomplete. But this is to take a superficial view of the use of friends. It is true that there is a sense in which friendship witnesses to human weakness and imperfection. As Love, according to Plato, is the child of Poros and Penia (Plenty and Want), so Aristotle tells us the gods have no need of friends. But the need to which friendship answers is not of something external to a man, such as pleasure or profit. It is a need which is bound up with his nature as man, viz. the need to realize what is best and most human in himself. Friends, in fact, are not an adventitious aid to a man's life. They represent the larger and truer life that belongs to him as a social being; only they represent it in a more intimate way, in terms that make it more easily recognizable, than society in general, however developed its form, can do.

This general answer Aristotle develops in c. ix. §§ 4–7, which Grant has excellently summarized. The two most important arguments are given in §§ 5 and 6. We have already anticipated them, but may here restate them in Grant's words. (1) "Happiness consists

in the play of life (ἐνέργεια), and he that sees before his eyes the virtuous acts of a friend has a delightful sense of the play of life, seeing harmonious action and identifying it with himself." (2) "The sympathy and excitement of friends enables a man to prolong that vivid action and glow of mind which is the essence of happiness." Finally he returns on his starting-point, and just as Plato had traced back the love of all creatures of the same species for one another to the desire for immortality, he shows how "from a deeper point of view" friendship is rooted in the most fundamental of all instincts—the love of life.

§ 5. *The Kinds of Friendship.*

[VIII. c. ii. § 1; c. iii. §§ 1 foll.]

While thus in the leading features of his doctrine as to the nature and function of friendship, Aristotle closely follows Plato, his classification of the different forms of friendship is a distinct advance. It was just for want of some such classification that Plato found himself hampered with questions to which he has not the means of replying.* It is, on the other hand, just by means of it that Aristotle is able, as Grant says, to cut straight through these difficulties, and in the course of doing so to give that air of finality to his discussion, which, even when compared with all that has since been written on the subject, it has never lost.

* For examples taken directly from Plato's *Lysis*, see VIII. c. i. §§ 6 and 7 (p. 282 below).

Aristotle speaks throughout of *kinds* of friendship, but it is clear from his manner of treatment that he regards them rather as elements that enter into all friendship and manifest themselves prominently according to the stage of development that the friendship has reached, than as clearly marked kinds. Thus it is clear from what has been already said that no partnership which is formed for pleasure alone or profit alone can have any permanence. There is honour, we are told, even among thieves. It is the element of character underlying such connexions that gives them whatever claim they have to the name of friendship. Similarly, Aristotle is careful to point out that the higher kind of friendship does not exclude pleasure and profit, but merely differs from the others in the genuineness of the pleasure and profit which it brings. These forms of friendship, moreover, corresponding as they do * to different stages in the development of the rational life in general—that of absorption in momentary states of pleasure and pain, that in which more distant objects begin to prevail over impulse and passion, imagination over sense experience, and that in which prudence in the narrower sense becomes merged in prudence in the larger, the half-truths of imagination in the whole-truth of reason—may rightly be taken for different phases of individual development.

It is, as we might expect, in the sections where Aristotle is engaged in marking off true friendship

* As Dr. Bosanquet has pointed out in his suggestive Syllabus of Lectures on *Leading Conceptions in Aristotle's Ethics*.

from the more imperfect forms, that some of his finest remarks occur.

True friends, we are told (c. iii. § 6), love one another "on account of what they are in themselves, and not on account of any accidental quality. Such friendship therefore endures so long as each retains his character, and virtue is a lasting thing"—more lasting, as we elsewhere learn, than knowledge itself. True friendship, again, is of slow growth. "The wish for friendship is of rapid growth, but friendship itself is not." For this reason (c. iv. § 3) it is "proof against calumny." Like charity, it hopeth all things, believeth all things. True friends respect one another's rights; they treat one another as ends, not as means only, and are thus secure against wrong. "In other kinds, on the contrary, there is no security against any form of wrong."

True friends are those who are of one mind with one another. But to be of one mind with an other is not merely to agree with his opinions. Such agreement, *e.g.* on a scientific question, does not necessarily lead on to friendship. On the other hand (we might add), mere difference of opinion does not estrange.* The kind of agreement and disagreement which is important is that which springs from being of the same or a different mind on "questions of the public advantage, and on all that touches life." Friendships based on agreement of this kind have the promise of permanence just because what is just

* Carlyle agreed with his friend John Sterling "in everything but opinion."

and right is something fixed and permanent, and those who seek after it "stand on the same ground."

It is natural that Aristotle should think mainly in these last sections of the friendship of citizens. Comradeship of this kind sprang naturally from the soil of Greek political life, and in some states, *e.g.* in Crete, was a recognized social institution. But he has no intention of limiting the application of the principle. He has already shown us that unity of interest of any kind, even that of casual fellow-passengers, may serve as a bond of friendship. He here adds that permanent friendships can only exist on the basis of interests which are permanent and important. But he would not confine these to politics. Art, science, religion, education, are examples that will occur to us as fields in which the right kind of unanimity may spring up, and by offering security against the strain that individual differences of taste and habit inevitably put on friendship, give the promise of permanence.

It is moreover natural that Aristotle should think mainly of the friendship of men to one another; to him this was the sole type of equal friendship. The modern ideal of marriage as a lifelong friendship between equals * is a conception altogether foreign to Greek social conditions. Whilst, however, the modern world cherishes this ideal, it cannot be said to have realized the necessity of securing the conditions of

* On Aristotle's view of the friendship between husband and wife the student should consult *Ethics*, VIII. c. x. § 4; c. xi. § 4; *Politics*, I. cc. xii. and xiii.

"true friendship" in these permanent alliances. "Unanimity," in the sense of agreement as to important questions of conduct and "all that touches life," is far from being generally accepted as the only true foundation of happiness in marriage. And there can be little doubt that it is just the want of some such common interest in a noble end, that makes life in so many cases one long discord.* Where there is no solid interest to serve as a standard, all sense of proportion or of relative value inevitably vanishes. The nervous irritation begotten of trifles becomes a prominent feature, lending colour to the cynic's saying that "small habits in married life produce more misery than vices." While some of the greatest writers have drawn attention to this as the source of many secret tragedies in married life, few have pointed with any clearness to the remedy. To take a single example: *Anna Karénina*, perhaps the most powerful novel of the kind, shows with an unflinching realism the slow degradation of the alliance founded on sexual passion alone. Yet the same novel gives food for reflection in the apparent acceptance by Count Tolstoi of petty strains and irritations as necessary incidents in the everyday intercourse even of the "happy marriage," and in his evident conviction that mutual interest in children is the sole harmonizer. To accept such an ideal of a lifelong alliance is surely to despair of human nature.

* See Note H.

§ 6. *Egoism and Altruism.*

[IX. c. viii.]

In no passage, however, is Aristotle more convincing than in his application of the above doctrine to current moral problems. The first he deals with (IX. c. vii.) has comparatively little interest for us, since it has become generally accepted—in theory, at least—"that it is more blessed to give than to receive." The philosophical gloss which he puts upon it—"The man who confers a benefit sees his own handiwork in the man who receives it ; he therefore loves it more than the work loves its maker"—is chiefly interesting as an illustration of his general doctrine. The second, however, is one that has never ceased to exercise philosophers and practical men alike, viz. the relation of self-love to love of others (IX. c. viii.). The answer that is here given amounts to a criticism of the popular antithesis between self and others, with the view of showing that the self which it is man's duty to love and seek to realize is the self which *includes* others, and in which therefore the *prima facie* opposition has disappeared. This cannot be otherwise if, as already proved, the end of man consists in a system of activities which presupposes not merely an aggregate of individuals, but an organized society.

The value of this solution will become apparent if we compare it with that of current Utilitarianism.

Starting with the popular antithesis, English ethical writers have asked whether virtue consists in regard for self, or regard for others. Various replies have been given in the past. Thus the earlier school led by Hobbes tended to resolve all conduct into a form of self-regard. The later doctrine of Utilitarianism resolved virtue into regard for others.* More recently Mr. Herbert Spencer's attempt to "conciliate" these two views has met with wide acceptance. The "conciliation" amounts to showing that, as a matter of fact, there is a large and ever-widening area of conduct in which a man can only attain what he must needs desire, viz. the greatest pleasure, by taking into account the similar desires of others.† It need hardly be pointed out at this stage that this is no real solution of the problem. It is merely a conspicuous case of what the logicians call *ignoratio elenchi*. That the way to the greatest happiness of individuals interpreted in terms of pleasure lies *de facto* through consideration of the happiness (in the same sense) of others, is no answer to the question whether the larger life has *de jure* a claim upon us. This question can only be truly answered when we have come to see that the self which includes others is a truer or more "natural" self than the self which excludes them. But this involves just such a criticism of the accepted antithesis as the teaching of Aristotle supplies. So long as the popular English philosophy refuses this better way, the problem must be for

* See Mill's *Utilitarianism*, c. ii.

† *Data of Ethics*, cc. xi.–xiv.

Ethics, as Mr. L. Stephen says, what the squaring of the circle is for Mathematics.

§ 7. *Friendship in Modern Education.*

Returning to the main function assigned by Plato and Aristotle to Friendship in the development of character, and comparing their view of it with our modern ideas on the same subject, the contrast is at first sight almost startling. It is not only that in modern states there is no attempt such as was not uncommon among the Greeks, and was advocated by Plato, to regulate friendship in the interest of society in general, but the subject is almost totally neglected by teachers and educational writers. It is hardly going too far to say that the element of personal attachment, especially among young people, has come to be regarded in some quarters with suspicion.* Even so enlightened a writer as Professor Baldwin seems to suggest that parents and teachers should do their best to prevent the formation of permanent friendships among children. The reader of Aristotle's *Ethics* will be inclined to regard this neglect as a great loss to the theory of education, and to agree with Mr. Edward Carpenter that those who carry it into practice "fling on the dust-heap one of the noblest and most precious elements in human nature." In contrast to the prevailing apathy (or worse) it is refreshing to read the same writer's bold statement of his belief that "the more

* See Mr. Edward Carpenter's protest, "Affection in Education," *International Journal of Ethics*, July, 1899.

the matter is thought of, the clearer will it appear that a healthy affection must in the end be the basis of education." We may be permitted to add that if what has already been said is true, the recognition of this fact may be expected to open a way out of other modern difficulties besides those of the schoolroom, to which Mr. Carpenter particularly refers.

Meantime it may help in some degree to bring this recognition about if, in conclusion, we note from the side of theory that there is one line of thought, familiar enough to the student of recent psychology, which may form a meeting-ground of ancient and modern ideas.

In tracing the development of consciousness, modern text-books lay stress on the growth of the idea of *self* as one of the most important ideas which a child acquires. Various "factors" are mentioned as entering into its formation—among others the social factor. The child, it is pointed out, does not grow up by itself, but as one among other selves, who re-act upon it in two ways. In the first place, the persons who surround it are a mirror in which it sees itself; and in the second, the actions of others, and especially those of intimate friends, offer a copy by means of which, under pressure of the dominant instinct of imitation, the child's consciousness of its own powers are developed.* Without going further we may see that there is much in this doctrine that reminds us of Aristotle. It might indeed appear that we have here only an extension to the consciousness of self in general of the

* See, for example, Professor Baldwin's *Social and Ethical Interpretations in Mental Development*, Bk. I. c. i.

principle which Aristotle confines to the consciousness of the moral self. There is, however, more in the Aristotelian doctrine than a partial anticipation of a popular modern view. It contains suggestions which go beyond and correct it in two essential particulars. In the first place the *self*-consciousness Aristotle is thinking of is not one among other forms of consciousness, the "idea" of self not one among other ideas. It is consciousness at its fullest development, *the* idea which includes and gives their place to all other ideas. It is thus the *end* of all individual development, not merely one of the elements in that development. But, secondly, in emphasizing "community of life and the intercourse of word and thought" as a factor in the development of self-consciousness, Aristotle is thinking of something far more important than imitation, conscious or unconscious. Imitation is the mere reproduction of the actions of another. Whether there is in normal human conduct any such thing as imitation in this sense, or whether in any action that can be properly called voluntary, there is not normally an element of adaptation, *i.e.* a real attempt to express *one's self*, accompanying the effort to reproduce, we need not further discuss.* If there be any such thing as imitation pure and simple, it is of comparatively little educational importance, and is certainly not what Aristotle has in view. He is thinking throughout of the power of friendship to stimulate *reciprocity* of services rather than imitation of the actions of another. It is in respect of their

* See what has already been said on this subject, chapter vi.

reciprocity that the mutual services of friends reproduce in microcosm those which civic society at large requires of us. What is claimed for friendship (to repeat it once more) is that by suffusing the life of ordinary social duty with the glow of feeling, it imparts to it at once a new glory and a new quality of transparency.

CHAPTER XIII.

PLEASURE.

"Pleasure is the unbought and unbuyable grace of life: the electric spark, as it were, which flashes out at the point where the outgoing line of action returns upon itself and is just completing its redintegration with self: it is the consciousness that the object which is presented by natural causes, or which we have ourselves produced by an act of will, is in harmony and co-operation with the subjective conditions and forces of life which reveal themselves in our voluntary agency."

W. WALLACE.

§ 1. *The Two Discussions of Pleasure in the Ethics.*

[Bk. VII. cc. xi.–xiv.; Bk. X. cc. i.–v.]

ARISTOTLE'S *Ethics* contain two separate discussions of Pleasure, one at the end of Book VII., the other at the beginning of Book X. *Prima facie*, the doctrine in these two passages is different. In the former, Aristotle seems to maintain that Pleasure is the supreme good; in the latter, to contest this opinion. The passage that causes the chief difficulty will be found in Book VII. c. xiii. § 2: "There is no reason why a certain kind of pleasure should not be the supreme good, even though some kinds be bad, just as there is no reason why a certain kind of knowledge should not be, though some kinds be bad. Nay, perhaps we

ought rather to say that since every formed faculty admits of unimpeded exercise, it follows that whether happiness be the exercise of all these faculties or of some one of them, that exercise must necessarily be more desirable when unimpeded; but unimpeded exercise of faculty is pleasure: a certain kind of pleasure, therefore, will be the supreme good, even though most pleasures should turn out to be bad in themselves."* Comparing this with the statement in Book X. c. iii. § 13, we seem in the two books to have contradictory views. In Book VII. the good is said to be "a kind of pleasure;" in Book X. "it seems to be established that pleasure is not the good." As a matter of fact the difference is much less than appears, and is resolvable into the different senses in which "pleasure" is taken. In Book VII. the word is taken in its popular sense of a concrete thing, or the actual exercise of a faculty; in Book X. the philosophical distinction is drawn between the activity itself and the pleasant feeling which is an attribute of it—"a superadded end like the grace of youth." In the former sense Aristotle would allow—as who but a fanatic would not?—that the end may be described as a form of pleasure. In the latter sense such an admission would be contrary to the whole teaching of the *Ethics*, and not merely to a casual statement in Book X.† The extracts given below

* I have given Peters' translation to enable the English reader the more easily to identify the passage.

† As Professor Stewart rightly says, the formula of VII. is "pleasure is unimpeded exercise of faculty," that of X. "pleasure perfects the exercise

are taken from the tenth Book, which, in addition to being the clearer and more philosophical, is the earlier and more undoubtedly Aristotelian statement.

The discussion falls into three parts: (1) the statement and criticism of current views; (2) Aristotle's view of the conditions and the effect of pleasure; (3) the application of his doctrine as a ground of explanation, (*a*) of the fact that every one desires pleasure; (*b*) that pleasures differ in kind. We may take these in their order.

§ 2. *Theories as to the Relation of Pleasure to the Good.*

[X. cc. i. and iii.]

Two theories were current in Aristotle's time as to the relation of pleasure to human life. The first (represented by Eudoxus) was that pleasure is the good; the second (represented by Speusippus and the straiter sect of the Platonists) that pleasure no less than pain was an evil, and that the good consisted in freedom from both.* The latter theory Aristotle rejects (1) on the characteristic ground of the universality of the

of faculty" (*op. cit.* ii. p. 221). In what follows, however, he seems somewhat to obscure the point. The difference between the Aristotelian doctrine of Book VII. and that of the Hedonists is not that, according to the one, "the Good (meaning the strenuous performance of the highest duty) is Pleasure;" according to the other, "Pleasure (meaning the pleasure of sense) is the Good"—but that according to the former the good life is a pleasant thing, according to the latter it is good because it is pleasant.

* Antisthenes the Cynic went further, and declared that he would rather be mad than feel pleased.

opposite opinion (c. ii. § 4); (2) because there are good pleasures as well as bad ones (c. iii. § 10). The former he rejects on the grounds (1) that there are things which we desire for their own sake quite apart from the pleasure that they bring—to wit: sight, memory, knowledge, virtue (c. iii. § 12); (2) that there are some states that we should not choose however much pleasure they brought with them, thus showing that we have another standard of preference besides the amount of pleasure that an object brings (c. iii. § 12).

It is characteristic of Aristotle that he seems here to have the heresy of Speusippus chiefly in view. It was the more repugnant to Greek sobriety, and at the same time to the common sense of mankind. The modern student, on the other hand, naturally turns to the arguments which are here directed against the hedonistic view as the more important part of these criticisms. To the former of the two arguments that are urged against it he will not be inclined to attach much importance. Modern hedonism admits that we *seem* to desire other things besides pleasure, but explains this as the result of association. Desired originally "as a means to happiness," they have come to be desired "as a part of happiness."*

The latter argument stands on a different footing, and has been constantly employed in our own time as a proof that pleasures differ in quality, and that the "quantity of pleasure" which actions bring independently of the source from which the pleasure is

* Mill's *Utilitarianisim*, p. 55.

derived, cannot, as the older hedonists held, be the true standard by which we estimate their value. There are two ways in which, from the hedonist point of view, it may be met. We may either airily deny with Bentham that pleasures do so differ—"one pleasure is as good as another if there is as much of it"—or we may take facts more seriously, and admit that common sense is right in drawing a clear distinction between kinds of pleasure. This, as is well known, is the course that J. S. Mill adopts. "Few human creatures," he says, echoing Aristotle's statement, "would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base—even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs."* It may, however, be questioned whether, in thus endeavouring to extend hedonism to cover the fact that Aristotle urges against it, Mill has not ruined it as a consistent theory. He gets over the difficulty himself by drawing a distinction between happiness and content or satisfaction in the well-known statement that "it is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied—better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool or the pig is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the

* *Op. cit.* p. 12.

question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides." * But this is only to widen the breach between his own theory and ordinary utilitarianism. For according to the view here stated, *happiness* consists in the activities that befit a human being, *satisfaction* in the pleasure which beings undisturbed by ideals obtain from living after their kind, and Mill only stops short of Aristotle in appealing, not to the form of universal life for which nature has marked man out, but first to the unsupported authority of "those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying both," and when this seems an insufficient explanation, to the "sense of dignity which all human beings possess in one form or other." †

§ 3. *The Conditions of Pleasure.*

[X. c. iv.]

In chapter iv. Aristotle makes a fresh start, and proceeds to examine the nature of pleasure with the view to a clearer statement of its relation to human happiness. The first part of the discussion that follows is naturally concerned with the conditions of

* *Op. cit.* p. 14.

† Extremes meet: the upholder of a "positive" philosophy is driven back, first on authority and then on intuition. In denying that Mill is here inconsistent with his own principles, Professor Stewart seems to illustrate the amiable confusion between a man's character and his opinions which Aristotle alludes to in c. ii. § 1. Undoubtedly Mill's "standard of conduct" was the public good. His theory, however, was that public good was the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and happiness to a consistent utilitarian means ultimately pleasure.

pleasure, the second with its effects. Aristotle's theory on these subjects is best understood in connexion with the stage that the analysis of pleasure had reached in the theories current in his time.

It is difficult for us to attach any meaning to a theory that identified pleasure with a "movement" or "process" (X. c. iii. § 4); but it was a distinct achievement in the earlier thinkers to have got beyond the crude materialism of ordinary thought. A movement or process is at least an *attribute* of concrete things, not a concrete thing or substance itself.* The account, moreover, seemed to agree well enough with the more obvious pleasures, such as those that arise from satisfying mental and bodily wants. From the definition of pleasure as a "process of becoming" (γένεσις) it was only a step to the theory that all pleasures are the effect of replenishment (iii. § 6), and to conceive of its essential condition as an antecedent pain or want.

Plato represents a great step in advance of these earlier attempts at analysis.† (1) He rejects the view that pleasure is necessarily preceded by pain. There are "unmixed" pleasures, such as those of knowledge, beauty of form and colour, sound and smell.‡ (2) He anticipates many of the distinctions we find in Aristotle, *e.g.* that between pleasures which, as preceded

* If modern hedonists had clearly recognized this they would have been saved much confusion. Bentham speaks of happiness or pleasure as divisible into "lots."

† His theory is most fully worked out in the *Philebus*.

‡ *Philebus*, 51 A.

by pain, are illusory inasmuch as they merely restore the function to its normal state, and those pleasures which accompany the active discharge of function and are pleasant in themselves. Especially he distinguishes the pleasures of the wise as the only true and unalloyed pleasures from all others as a mere shadow of pleasure.* (3) Though accepting verbally the account of pleasure as a process of becoming, and congratulating its authors (perhaps the Cyrenaics),† he lays no stress upon it and seems throughout to be conscious of its inadequacy.

The ground was thus prepared for Aristotle's doctrine. Like Plato he rejects the earlier theories of "movement" and "replenishment," and on similar grounds (X. c. iii. § 7). Like Plato also he distinguishes pleasures that are preceded by pain and want as only accidentally pleasant (VII. c. xii. § 2 ; c. xiv. § 4), from those that accompany the active discharge of function ; the pleasures of the good man "as pleasures in the truest sense," from those of the bad man as only pleasant "in a secondary and partial sense" (X. c. iii. § 8). The advance which he makes consists in discarding the old terminology and fixing upon unimpeded activity, whether of body or of soul, whether preceded by actual obstruction or proceeding from a state which lacks nothing of the fulness of its nature, as the essential condition of pleasure (X. c. iv. § 5 ; cp. VII. c. xii. § 3).

* *Rep.* 583 B. "A sage whispers in my ear that no pleasure except that of the wise is quite true and pure—all others are a shadow only."

† *Philebus*, 53 and 54 ; cp. *Rep.* IX. 583 E.

§ 4. *Modern Criticism of Aristotle's Formula.*

Reserving, meantime, the question of the significance of the above distinction between true and false pleasures, we may try to bring this well-known definition of pleasure into touch with modern thought by noticing one or two of the objections that have been brought against it by modern critics. The theory itself is restated by Sir William Hamilton in his *Lectures on Metaphysics* * in the form: "Pleasure is the concomitant in every case where powers and objects are in themselves perfect, and between which there subsists a suitable relation." In another passage he expands this into the proposition: "Pleasure is a reflex of the spontaneous and unimpeded exertion of a power of whose energy we are conscious. Pain is a reflex of the overstrained or repressed exertion of such a power." † Against the theory as so stated, J. S. Mill ‡ brings two objections: (1) The formula, however suggestive when applied to pleasure connected with activities of body and mind, fails when applied to pains and pleasures in which the mind and body are passive, as in most of the organic and a large portion of the emotional. (2) It implies the fallacy of circle in definition, seeing that there is "no criterion of imperfect or perfect action except that it produces pain or pleasure." Professor Stewart, who quotes this criticism, seems to accept it as sound, while defending

* Vol. ii. p. 452 foll.

† *Ibid.* p. 440.

‡ *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, pp. 537 and 563.

Aristotle's formula against it on the ground that it is directed to the practical purpose of showing the relation of pleasure to happiness, not to giving a psychological account of the nature of pleasure. As Aristotle's view of the relation of pleasure to happiness is expressly founded on an attempt "to make the true nature of Pleasure plainer," this is hardly satisfactory. There is, however, as a matter of fact, no need to have recourse to any such apology. The theory is untouched by Mill's criticisms.

1. With regard to the particular organic sensation which Mill mentions, viz. sweetness, it is of course true that Aristotle failed to anticipate the suggestions of modern physiology in the analysis of the conditions of the pleasure that normally accompanies it. On such a subject any ancient theorist (and Mill himself must here be reckoned among the ancients) could only have the vaguest presentiment of the truth. The advantage which Aristotle's formula has over others is that it is at any rate quite consistent with the modern physiological theory which represents organic pleasure as the accompaniment of increased excitability of sensory and motor areas, whether of the periphery or of the cerebral cortex. * Whether this theory can be substantiated with respect to the pleasures of taste must be left to physiologists to determine, but it implies a somewhat narrow view of the scope of scientific hypothesis if, in the absence of a more satisfactory formula (and Mill himself suggests no other),

* Külpe, *Outlines of Psychology*, Eng. tr., pp. 246, 270 foll.

we may not hold to one that covers at least a large portion of the phenomena.

With regard to pleasurable and painful emotions, Aristotle's theory is necessarily as defective from the side of psychology as his account of organic pleasures and pains is from the side of physiology. But here also it is rather an extension than a total rejection of the hint he gives that is required. According to the view stated above, pleasure is the accompaniment of the unimpeded action of organ or faculty in touch with its object. In formulating this definition, Aristotle clearly has in view such natural capacities as sense perception. But his theory is equally applicable to those acquired faculties which modern psychology treats of under the head of "appercipient masses." An important class of such faculties are what we know as our "sentiments," consisting of residua of ideas, feelings, motor impulses, etc., experienced in connexion with a particular object or group of objects, *e.g.* family, friends, country, etc. Any "mass" so formed stands to its object as the so-called natural faculties do to theirs. Like them it may be latent ; or again, it may be called into active operation by the presence of the object in thought or reality. So understood, there is no difficulty in bringing "emotional pleasure" under the Aristotelian formula. Let the sentiment be affection for a friend. The presence of the friend is in that case the stimulus under which the system or faculty acts. It calls forth all the pleasant associations of past intercourse—the old jokes, the common friends, the whole golden age of

auld lang syne. We have literally here a flow of soul —an unimpeded activity. Let it be, on the other hand, merely the idea of our friend that occurs, and with it the consciousness of some barrier to the active exercise of the affection, *e.g.* distance or death, and mingled often strangely enough with the pleasure of the outgoing energy of affection is the pain that comes from the hindrance that is imposed upon it. *

2. The second of the above objections is founded on a simple misunderstanding of the Aristotelian philosophy, according to which a firm distinction is drawn between the activity and the attribute of the activity, viz. the pleasure or the pain that accompanies it. The activity is something objective, palpable, measurable. It mixes itself with things: fails of its object, or is successful. The pleasure is subjective, impalpable, unmeasurable, remaining hidden in the soul and standing to the successful activity as grace and glow stand to youth, but is neither the thing itself nor any true criterion of its real value in the system of things. That Mill fails to acknowledge this distinction, and insists that the criterion of the value—the perfection or imperfection of the activity—can only be the pleasure it brings, merely shows how far the form of Utilitarianism which he has rendered popular is from the truth that Aristotle has here grasped.

* The reader should consult, in the light of Aristotle's formula, Mr. Stout's excellent treatment of Pleasure and Pain, *Analytic Psychology*, Bk. II. c. xii. ; *Manual of Psychology*, Bk. III. div. i. c. iii.

§ 5. *The Effect of Pleasure.*

[X. c. iv. §§ 6–11 ; c. v. §§ 3–5.]

In reply to those who taught that pleasure is an obstruction to the higher activities of the soul,* Aristotle draws a distinction between pleasure which is proper and pleasure which is foreign to the activity, maintaining that faculties are not impeded by the pleasure proper to themselves. On the contrary, the effect of this pleasure is to perfect the exercise of faculty. Hindrance can only come from foreign pleasure.

There is perhaps no part of Aristotle's doctrine that has been so emphatically endorsed by modern theory as this account of the effect of pleasure. From the side of physiology we now know that the effect of pleasure in perfecting life is already foreshadowed in its effect upon the physical organism—the increased power of the voluntary muscles and of the pulse-beats, and even the increased volume of the limbs. On the other hand, it has been found that pain diminishes the force of muscular action, weakens the pulse, constricts the peripheral blood-vessels, and so causes decrease of volume in the limbs.† It is only a further application of the same principle when it is pointed out that the expressive movements which accompany joyful emotion are lively, expansive, rhythmical ; those that accompany painful emotion,

* *Ethics*, VII. c. xii. § 5, which should be compared with the sections in X. c. iv.

† See Külpe, *op. cit.* pp. 245, 246.

loose, shrinking, spasmodic.* From the side of Ethics we have already had occasion to notice (p. 76) that a good action is none the worse for being done with pleasure, but, on the contrary, is all the better. It is now seen that this is only an instance of the general law that pleasure, by causing efforts to be continued or repeated, completes and perfects them, while pain acts as a drag upon the activity.

> "A merry heart goes all the day,
> Your sad tires in a mile-a!"

While modern psychology thus confirms the account that Aristotle here gives of the effect of pleasure and pain, it indicates an important limitation of the principle which it is important for practice to observe. Besides their general effect in respectively completing and obstructing the exercise of faculty—and, indeed, because of it—pleasure and pain under particular circumstances seem to have quite other and contrary effects. As is well known, that to which an organism has become accustomed is pleasant. The organism will thus be apt to continue or repeat the actions which are found to be pleasant. In this way pleasure tends to act as a conservative force keeping organisms in a round of familiar and stereotyped reactions. Pain, on the other hand, being a sign of maladjustment to object or environment, tends to throw the organism into a state of reaction against the cause of irritation, and so acts as a stimulant to movement and change. Where such a change is

* Professor Ward's article on "Psychology," *Encycl. Brit.*, vol. xx. p. 68.

required by the health or life of the organism, pleasure will thus act in the direction of imperfect adjustment—pain in the direction of a fuller and completer life. Transferring this principle to human life, the essence of which is aspiration and progress through more or less painful effort, it is clear that the pleasure we take in the exercise of already acquired powers may tempt us to rest content with present achievements, and thus be a bar to progress.

> "Let us alone—what pleasure can we have
> To war with evil? Is there any peace
> In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
> Give us long rest or death—dark death or dreamful ease."

On the other hand, the pain of impeded effort, unfulfilled aspiration, will often act as a stimulant to energy, and become the source of progressively completed powers.

> "Still, 'tis the check that gives the leap its lift."

The moral of this qualification of the Aristotelian doctrine is not that we should revert to the theory which Aristotle has once for all disposed of—that pleasure is by its nature evil—but that we should hold more firmly to the doctrine which he has done more than any other writer to establish, viz. that pleasure, though an excellent test of the partial realization of the self, can never be taken as a sufficient guide to the particular mode of activity which is at the moment desirable. The nature of things offers no guarantee that the course which is the most truly desirable is that which is in the line of the least resistance or

the greatest pleasure. On the contrary, the fact that what is truly desirable is progress towards the fuller realization of a self which is never completely what it has in it to be, is sufficient proof that an element of pain will always mingle with human effort, and that no ideal can be more delusive, either from the theoretical or the practical side, than that of a completely frictionless life.

§ 6. *Applications of the above Theory.*

[X. c. iv. §§ 10 and 11 ; c. v. §§ 6–11.]

In the succeeding sections the theory of pleasure, as already stated, is applied to explain (*a*) the fact that every one desires pleasure, and (*b*) the distinction between true and false pleasure.

— (*a*) As pleasure, then, is a necessary accompaniment of the activities which constitute life, and as these activities are an object of desire to all men, it is easy to see how all men come to desire pleasure. True, Aristotle seems to leave it still an open question "whether we choose life for the sake of pleasure, or pleasure for the sake of life." But, after what has been already said, this need not cause any difficulty. The discussion throughout has proceeded upon the assumption that what all men desire and make for is life itself, and not any adjunct of life. Their various energies have their source in instincts and impulses directing them to one or other of the elements of life, and acting with peremptory force before any experience of pleasure resulting from their satisfaction.

Pleasure is merely the sign that one or other of these has attained its object, and that we have lived to purpose. The doctrine that it is pleasure, or, more correctly, the idea of pleasure, which normally stimulates to action is, as Wallace says,* on a par with the converse doctrine that it is present uneasiness of desire which determines to voluntary action ; and this, as we have seen, is incompatible with Aristotle's view that there are activities which are preceded by no feeling of want or pain.

(*b*) In view of the above theory of pleasure we can further understand how pleasures differ from one another in worth. According to our theory, activities are not valuable because they produce pleasure, but pleasure is valuable according to the kind of activity which it accompanies. If the question is put where we are to look for the standard of activity, and therefore of pleasure, we are referred to the good man (c. v. § 10). His pleasures are the only ones that are pleasant in the true and proper sense of the word. Taken by themselves these words might seem to be a mere evasion, and to carry us no further than the Utilitarian appeal to the authority of the man who has had experience of both kinds.† Taken, however, in connexion with all that has already been said of the good man as the individual embodiment of the system of life to which man's true nature points, it will be seen to be more than this. The true standard is not the individual who chances for the moment to

* *Lectures and Essays*, p. 347.

† See p. 193 foll. above.

embody this order, but the order itself as it reveals itself to reason through him. Let us recall what we have already implied with respect to the activities of such a man. In analyzing human activity we have already had occasion to note that just because it is human activity it is not the activity of a mere individual. It has reference at every point to the larger whole in which the true life of the individual man is to be sought. Every act, therefore, however narrow its apparent scope, really points beyond its immediate object to the wider life as to the context which gives it meaning.* We might even say that it is only in virtue of its relation to this wider life that it is a human act at all. Foolish and wicked actions are those whose form as issuing from a human will is contradicted by the narrowness and selfishness of their actual scope. Such actions are untrue in the sense that they fail to express what as human actions they purport to express, viz. the universal order which, though belied in their execution, is implied in their form as actions of the human will. Wise and good action, on the other hand, is the action in which what is actually willed, viz. the conduct required by the permanent structure of society, is in harmony with the form of will as essentially social. Representing the true as opposed to the apparent will, such actions may be said to be themselves true and real.

* For an admirable statement of this truth in modern philosophy, see Dr. Bosanquet's essay on "The Reality of the General Will" in *Aspects of the Social Problem.*

We have only to translate what has just been said into terms of feeling to understand what Aristotle means by true and false pleasures. Just as no man, however selfish he may be, can really live to himself, so no man can be pleased to himself. "If we set aside for the moment abnormal cases, we may say that all pleasures have a social element, and that they cease to be real pleasures except in so far as they are correlated to the consciousness of other men. The pleasures of ambition, power, love, severally, are complete only when they are responded to by the feelings of others." * Our pleasures, like our actions, reflect our social nature, and the standard of pleasure, as the standard of action, is that they should reflect it in its completeness. It is true that they, like our actions, begin in the narrow circle of the individual soul; they are *our* pleasures, signs, as we have seen, that some circumstance is momentarily in harmony with our organs or faculties. But they, like our actions, have an outlook on an experience wider than our own. They imply relations to a larger life. Wisdom consists in permitting our momentary impulses to seek what is pleasant, to be moulded and deepened by the larger experience of which they are a part. Error and delusion begin when we turn a deaf ear to the message they bring of this larger life, and hear only what they tell us of the moment, so mistaking a feeling which has truth and reality only in a context, for a thing desirable in itself. How this larger experience can be made a reality to the individual

* Wallace's *Lectures and Essays*, p. 359.

soul and act from the outset as a corrective to the natural tendency to mistake the momentary pleasure for the whole of happiness, is the problem of moral education. Aristotle's contribution to its solution in these sections on Pleasure is to warn us against Quixotic hostility to all forms of it on the one hand, and indiscriminate approval of it as necessarily and in its own nature good, on the other.

SELECTED PASSAGES

FROM THE

NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

SELECTED PASSAGES

FROM THE

NICOMACHEAN ETHICS.*

I.

THE SCIENCE OF ETHICS.

[NICOMACHEAN ETHICS.—I. i.] NOT only all arts and 1
sciences but all actions directed by choice aim at some good.
And so the Good has been well defined as the end at which
all things aim. But there is a distinction among the ends 2
themselves. Some consist in the activities, others in some
ulterior result, and where the latter is the case the results
are of greater value than the activities which produce them.
Now, as there are numerous kinds of actions and numerous 3
arts and sciences, there are also numerous ends. Thus the

* Three works associated with Aristotle's name and entitled Ethics have come down to us: known respectively as the "Nicomachean," the "Eudemian" and the "Greater." The older view was that the last, which, in spite of its name, is much the shortest of the three, was the original work of which the others were later expansions. This is now given up and the first accepted as probably in great part actually written by Aristotle, the two latter being restatements of the Aristotelian doctrine by other hands. It derives its title from the son to whom the task of editing his father's notes was assigned.

end of the healing art is health, of shipbuilding—ships,
4 of strategy—victory, of economy—wealth. But when a number of them fall under some single art or science, as the manufacture of bridles and other accoutrements falls under horsemanship, this again, together with all warlike accomplishments, under generalship, and so on, the end of the master art is more desirable than those of the subordinate faculties, as it is that for the sake of which the others are
5 pursued. And this is equally true whether we suppose the end to consist in the mere exercise of faculty or in some ulterior result as in the cases just mentioned.

1 [ii.] If, then, in the field of conduct there is some one end which we desire for its own sake, other things being desired because they contribute to it, and if we do not choose everything on account of something else, for this would go on to infinity and leave our desires without point or purpose, clearly this must be the Chief Good, being
2 the best of all things. And surely to know what this Good is, is of some practical importance, for in that case we shall be as archers shooting at a definite mark, and shall be more
3 likely to do what is right. This being so, we must try to indicate roughly what it is and to which of the sciences it belongs.

4 Now, it would seem to belong to the science which is supreme over all the others and best corresponds to our
5 idea of a master science. But the science of politics or citizenship clearly answers to this description, for it
6 prescribes what sciences are needed by a state, which of them each of the citizens shall be taught, and up to what point. Moreover, we find that even the studies that are held in highest repute, such as economics and oratory, are
7 subordinate to it. Seeing, then, that it employs the services of all the other sciences, and, furthermore, defines what the

citizens are to do and what they are to refrain from doing, the end which this science sets itself will embrace all other ends and will be, in fact, the Good of Man. And even 8
though this is the same for individuals and communities, yet the good of the community is grander and more sufficing to lay hold of and to keep. For though we may often rest satisfied with merely individual good, yet the good of a nation or a state is nobler and more divine. This, then, is the scope of our study which we shall best describe as the science of politics.

[iii.] In pursuing this study we shall have done enough if 1
we attain such precision as the subject permits of. For it is a mistake to look for the same exactness in all kinds of reasoning, just as it would be in all kinds of manufacture. Nobility 2
and justice, which are the subject-matter of the science of politics, appear in many forms, and are the subject of much uncertainty. So much is this the case that they are sometimes thought to be only conventional and not natural distinctions. There is a similar uncertainty about things 3
which are good in themselves because of the harm they sometimes do. For some men have been ruined by riches; others have lost their lives by courage. We must be satisfied, 4
therefore, in reasoning upon these subjects, to give only a rough sketch of the truth, and when our premises are not universal laws but statements of what generally or probably occurs, to draw only probable conclusions. In the same spirit the reader must accept all that is here stated, for no one who pretends to education will look for more exactness in the treatment of any subject than the nature of the subject admits of. To ask mathematical demonstrations from an orator is as absurd as to accept probable reasoning from a mathematician. As a matter of fact, a man has a fine sense 5
for subjects with which he is familiar, and in these he is a

good critic. This is true of the man of special culture in respect to his speciality, and in respect to things in general of the man of general culture. Hence it is that young men are not as a rule good students of moral philosophy. For here the foundation as well as our subject-matter is moral experience, which is precisely what is wanting in youth.
6 Young men, moreover, are apt to be swayed by passion, and to reap little profit from a study the object of which
7 is not merely knowledge but conduct. And this holds of those who are young in character as well as in years. For the defect is not a matter of time, but consists in their living according to passion and following the objects which passion suggests. In the case of such persons, as in the case of the intemperate man, knowledge is of little avail. Those, on the other hand, whose actions and desires are under the control of reason, may expect to benefit considerably from the theoretic study of these subjects.

II.

OPINIONS AS TO THE NATURE OF HAPPINESS.

[1. iv.] To return: inasmuch as all science and action aims at 1
some good, what is it that is the aim of the science of politics?
in other words, what is the highest good? About the name 2
there is no disagreement. Both educated and uneducated
alike declare that it is Happiness, taking Happiness as
equivalent to living and doing well. But here agreement
ends, for when they come to define happiness the multitude
say one thing, philosophers another. The mass of mankind 3
take it to be some palpable and obvious good, such as pleasure,
wealth, and honour, though they are not agreed as to which.
You will find even the same man of a different mind at
different times. After an illness he will say it is health, when
in poverty, riches; at other times, conscious how little he
knows, he is ready to defer to those who declare it to be
some splendid quality which passes their understanding.
Some philosophers, again, think that besides the several good
things there is some absolute good which is the cause of
their goodness.

As it would serve no purpose to examine all the various 4
views that have been held on the subject, it will be sufficient
to select those theories of life which are most popular, or
recommend themselves to thinkers.

We must, however, recollect that there is a distinction 5

between theories that take universal principles as their starting-point and proceed deductively, and those that start from particulars and proceed inductively to universals; and Plato was right in raising the question whether the true method was from principles or to principles, just as one might ask whether in the racecourse the race ought to be from the starting-point to the boundary, or *vice versâ*. We shall agree, I think, that we must start from the known. But there is an ambiguity here: we may mean what is known to the individual or what is known in the strict sense of the term.

Now, we may safely say that we, at least, must start
6 from individual experience. And this is why the student of the good and justice, and of politics generally, if he is going to make anything of the subject, must himself have a good
7 character. For our data here are moral judgments, and if a man knows what it is right to do he does not require a formal reason. Such persons either know the reason of their actions, or if they do not they can easily be got to accept it when it is pointed out to them. On the other hand, if a man has neither kind of knowledge he may take to heart the lines of Hesiod—

> "He is the best of them all who knoweth all with his reason.
> He, too, surely is good who lendeth an ear to good counsel.
> But where is the use of the wight who, knowing naught of himself, recks
> Naught of the word of a friend, nor lendeth an ear to advisers?"

1 [v.] Let us now resume the discussion at the point from which we digressed. We can easily understand how the majority of mankind and people who want refinement, in-
, fluenced by the lives they lead themselves, hold that Happiness or the Good is pleasure, and accordingly accept the life

of pleasure as their ideal. For there are three lives which 2
stand out conspicuously—the life of pleasure, the political
life, and the life of reflection. The mass of mankind, like 3
the slaves that they are, show a marked preference for the
life of brute beasts. And this opinion has received attention
because many of those in higher station are of the same
mind as Sardanapalus.* Educated people, on the other 4
hand, with a practical turn, prefer honour, which, I suppose,
is the end of the political life. But honour is too superficial
an attribute to be the good we are in search of, depending,
as it appears to do, rather on those who give than on those
who receive it ; whereas we divine the good to be something
proper to a man which cannot easily be taken away from
him. Moreover, a man seems to pursue honour in order to 5
obtain the assurance of his own excellence, for he seeks to
win the respect of men of sense and of those who know
him, which means that he wishes to be honoured for his
virtues. So that it is obvious that, in his view at least,
virtue is higher than honour, and perhaps one ought to say 6
that it is virtue which is the real aim of the political life.
But even virtue and goodness are touched with imperfection,
inasmuch as a man might have all the virtues and yet be
asleep or fail to achieve anything all his life. Such a person,
moreover, may suffer the greatest misfortunes, and no one in
this case would call him happy except for argument's sake.
The third life is the life of thought—the discussion of which 7
I shall reserve. As for the money-making life, it is some- 8
thing quite contrary to nature, and wealth is clearly not the
good of which we are in search. For it is only useful as a

* Asshur-bani-pal, who is said to have had verses inscribed on his tomb in which he declared, "All that I ate upon earth, all things that I boasted enjoying | All else leaving behind, I retain an abiding possession."

means to something else, and for this reason there is less to be said for it than for the ends mentioned above, which at any rate are desired for their own sakes. But they, too, are unsatisfactory, in spite of all the arguments that have been expended on them. . . .

3 [vii.] Let us try to make this clearer. Seeing that there are many ends, and that some of them are chosen merely as means—*e.g.* wealth, flutes, and generally all instruments and tools—it is clear that all ends are not equally final and perfect. But the best of all must be something final in this sense. Accordingly, if there is only one final end this will be what we are in search of; if there are more than one, then it 4 will be the most final of them. But we call that which is desired for its own sake more "final" than that which is desired as a means to something else, and that which is never chosen as a means than that which is chosen both as an end and as a means; and therefore we call that absolutely final and perfect which is always chosen as an end in itself, and never 5 as a means. And this seems to be pre-eminently the character of Happiness. For we always choose it for its own sake, and never for anything else; whereas honour and pleasure and intelligence, together with every other excellent quality, we choose, partly it is true, on their own account (for we should choose them even although they brought no further result), but partly also for the sake of the happiness, which we suppose that they will bring. But no one chooses Happiness for the sake of such things as these, nor for the 6 sake of anything else at all. And we reach the same result if we take self-sufficiency as our test. For the final good must be self-sufficient. By this we do not mean that it makes the man who lives a solitary life sufficient for himself. That is impossible. Happiness implies parents, children, wife, and, in short, friends and fellow-citizens, since man is

by nature a citizen. We must indeed draw a line some- 7
where, for if we are to include grandparents and ancestors and friends of friends there will be no end to it. But we may leave this meantime, and define the self-sufficient as that which of itself makes life desirable and in need of nothing. And this is precisely what Happiness does.

Moreover, Happiness is itself the most desirable thing in 8
the world; but in calling it the most desirable of all goods we must not be understood to imply that it is one among others. If we were to do so we should have to suppose that it is rendered more desirable by the addition of even the least of goods, since addition increases the amount, and of two goods the greater is always the more desirable. Happiness, then, as the end of all action is something final and self-sufficing.

III.

THE ELEMENTS OF HAPPINESS.

9 [I. vii.] But it may perhaps be said that every one is
agreed that Happiness is the best of all things: what we
10 require is a clearer definition of its nature. In order to answer
the question, What is Happiness? we must first ask another:
What is the proper function of man? For just as goodness
and excellence in a piper or a sculptor, or the practiser of any
art, and generally in every one who has any function or busi-
ness in the world consists in the performance of this function,
so the good of man will be found to consist in the per-
11 formance of his function, if, so be, he has one. But surely if
a carpenter or a shoemaker has each a work and business of
his own, we cannot suppose that man has none. Just as the
eye, the hand, and the foot, and generally each part of the
body has a function of its own, surely the man himself must
12 have some function over and above all these. What is this
function? Clearly it is not mere life; for life he has in
common even with the plants, and what we are in search
of is something peculiar to man. We must therefore set
aside the life which consists in mere nutrition and growth.
Above this comes the life of sense. But this also he shares
13 with horses and cattle and every kind of animal. There
remains only the life of a being who possesses reason and
manifests himself in conduct. And as the rational life may

be understood in two senses, either as a state or as the active exercise of function, we must take it in the latter, as this seems to be its more proper sense. Man's function, then, 14
is an activity of the soul determining itself rationally, or at any rate rationally determined. But what we call the function of a man in any profession, and the function of the man who is good at that profession, are generically the same, *e.g.* of a harper and of a good harper. And this holds throughout, only that in the latter case we add a reference to a man's superior skill in his work, and say that to harp being the function of the harper, to harp *well* is the function of the good harper. This being so, we may define the good of man as *an activity* 15
of the soul in accordance with excellence, or if there are several kinds, according to the best and most consummate form of excellence. To which we must add *in a full term of years*, for 16
as one swallow or one warm day does not make Spring, so a single day or a short time of happiness does not make a man blessed or happy. This, then, may stand for a rough outline 17
of the Good. For it is well to begin with a rough sketch the details of which we may afterwards proceed to fill in. . . .

[viii.] But before proceeding to do so, it will be well to 1
examine the result at which we have so far arrived, not only as a conclusion from our data, but also in the light of the opinions that are held upon the subject. For if a thing be true, common facts will readily fall into line, but if it be false, they will soon show themselves at variance with it.

Applying this to the question before us we find that good 2
things have been divided into three kinds: so-called external goods, goods of the body, and goods of the soul. And of these the last are commonly said to be goods in the strictest and best sense. Now, conduct and all the activities of the soul may be said to be goods of the soul. So that

this classification, which is an ancient one, and has been
3 approved by philosophers, supports our definition. Indeed, it
would be enough to say that the end consists in a species of
conduct and in the performance of function to secure the
support of this opinion; for such a statement brings the end
within the class goods of the soul, and excludes it from
4 that of external goods. Again, our definition agrees with the
popular saying that the happy man lives well and fares well,
for we may say that in our own view happiness is good life
5 and welfare. Further, the various things that people look
for in happiness will be found to be provided for by our
6 definition. For some claim that it is virtue or excellence,
others wisdom and prudence, others philosophy; others,
again, hold it to be all of these, or some one of them with
pleasure, either as an essential element or as a natural
accompaniment, added to it. Others finally include also
7 outward prosperity in the account. Now, some of these
opinions have the support of numbers and of antiquity;
others, again, are the opinions of a few distinguished men.
And it is unreasonable to suppose that both are wholly
wrong: it is more likely that in some one particular at
least, if not in most, both the multitude and the philo-
8 sophers are right. Our definition, then, agrees in the first
place with the view that good is excellence, or some
form of excellence. For "exercise of function in accord-
9 ance with excellence" is itself an excellence. But it
makes no little difference whether we take the good as con-
sisting in possession or in use, in a mere habit or in the
active exercise of faculty. For the habit may be present but
produce no good result, *e.g.* when a man is asleep or other-
wise idle. But this is impossible in the case of the active
exercise of virtue, which necessarily realizes itself in actions
and in good actions. And just as at the Olympic games it

is the fairest and the strongest, not of those who are present but of those who contest the prize, that are crowned (for only such are *victors*), so it is those who not only have all the virtues, but who manifest them in action, who win the high prize of life. Again, the life of such men is pleasant 10
in itself. For pleasure is of the soul, and each man finds pleasure in that which his soul desires: the lover of horses in horses, the lover of sights in spectacles, and so on. In the same way the lover of justice finds pleasure in acts of justice, and generally the lover of excellence in all that is excellent. It is true, indeed, that the pleasures of the 11
multitude conflict with one another, the reason being that they are not naturally and essentially pleasant; but the pleasures of the man who loves what is noble are naturally pleasant, and seeing that manifestations of excellence are naturally pleasant they must be pleasant in themselves as well as to him. His life, therefore, does not require the addition 12
of pleasure as a mere appendage, but has pleasure in itself. We might even say that no one is good who does not take pleasure in the works of goodness; for we should not call a man just unless he took pleasure in doing justice, nor liberal who did not take pleasure in acts of liberality, and similarly with the other virtues. If this is so, virtuous action 13
must be pleasant in itself. Again, it is good and beautiful, and that in the highest degree, at least if we are to trust the judgment of good men, for this is their judgment upon it. Happiness, then, we may take it, is the best, the loveliest, 14
and the pleasantest thing in the world. And these are not separated as in the Delian inscription—

"Fairest of all is the justest, the best is the health of the whole. Yet Sweetest hath nature decreed it to win what the soul hath desired."

For all these are properties of the best activities, and our

definition identifies happiness with these or with the best of them.

15 Yet it would seem that external goods are also requisite in the sense we have explained. For as it is impossible, or at any rate difficult, to play a noble part without the proper equipment, so there are many things that can be done only through the instrumentality of friends and wealth
16 and political influence. Moreover, there are some things the absence of which casts a stain upon perfect happiness, *e.g.* birth, fine children, good looks. For the man who is positively ugly, or who is unfortunate in his parents, or solitary and childless, is not likely to attain complete happiness; still less the man whose children or friends turn out altogether bad, or who has lost the good ones he once
17 had. As we have said, then, the happy man seems to require a degree of the kind of prosperity just described. And this is why some theorists have identified happiness with good fortune, just as others have identified it with excellence.

1 [ix.] This, too, is why people have been led to ask whether happiness is the result of instruction or of habit, or of training of any other kind, or whether it is not rather a gift bestowed on certain favoured persons by God or by fortune.
2 In reply to this we may admit that if God has bestowed any gift upon mortal man we might reasonably suppose that happiness is such a gift, inasmuch as it is the best of
3 human possessions. Perhaps, however, we may leave this question as falling within the province of another branch of study. For even although happiness is not a heaven-sent gift, but is the natural consequence of virtue, and of a special form of instruction or training, it may yet very well be one of the divinest things. For the prize of virtue and the best of all possible ends is surely something blessed and divine.
4 This would explain, too, the admitted fact that happiness is

not confined to a select few, but is common to many, seeing that it is open to all, who are not incapacitated for virtue, to attain it by study and diligent application. Moreover, if it 5
is *better* that happiness should be attained in this way rather than by chance, it is reasonable to suppose that it is so, since the products of organic nature reach the highest perfection possible to them. And the same is true of art 6
and every other steady principle of causation, *a fortiori* of the noblest principle of all. And, indeed, it surely would be absurd to entrust the greatest and best of all to the operation of chance.

But our definition itself throws light upon this question. 7
For we defined happiness as an activity of the soul in accordance with excellence of a certain definite kind; dividing all other goods into those that are necessary as conditions of happiness, and those that are useful as aids and instruments. Now, these conclusions agree with what 8
we said at the outset. For we there laid it down that political science sets before itself the highest of all aims, and makes it its chief business to produce a certain definite character in the citizens, *i.e.* to make them good and ready for noble actions. We are therefore right in refusing to call 9
an ox or a horse or any other of the lower animals happy. For none of these is able to share in this kind of activity. For the same reason not even children can be happy, seeing 10
that their age prevents them from taking part in such a life. If we call them happy it is only proleptically. For as we have already said, happiness requires not only perfect excellence, but a full term of years wherein to exercise it. For our life is exposed to many changes, and to all 11
sorts of chances, and one who has been very prosperous may meet with great misfortunes in old age, as did Priam in the tale of Troy; nor could one who has fallen upon

misfortunes of this kind, and perished miserably, be called happy.

1 [x.] Are we, then, it may be asked, to call no man happy till he dies, but, as Solon enjoins, await the end? . . . This 7 could not be maintained. For surely it would be absurd if when a man is happy we should refuse to say so through not wishing to call the living happy, or because of the changes to which life is subject, and because we conceive of happiness as something stable and relatively unchangeable, whereas the fortunes of one and the same individual often follow 8 cycles of good and bad. It is clear that if we were to be guided by a man's fortune we should call the same man happy and miserable over and over again, giving to happiness 9 a chameleon form and founding it on sand. Is it not, therefore, better wholly to refuse to take fortune as our guide, seeing that it is not fortune that is decisive as to weal or woe? It is true, indeed, as we have said, that good fortune is needed to complete man's life; but it is the excellent performance of his function that is the sovereign cause of happiness, and the opposite of its absence. And this view is further confirmed by the very difficulty we have 10 been discussing. For no work of man's hands is so stable as the excellent performance of function, than which even the sciences themselves seem to be less abiding. Moreover, of all its various forms, those are the stablest which are the highest, for it is in these that the truly happy experience the most vivid and sustained consciousness of life. And 11 this is why we do not forget them. The happy man, therefore, will have the required degree of stability, and will remain happy all his life. For he will be occupied constantly, or as constantly as possible, with actions and thoughts that are great and good, and will accept whatever befalls in the noblest spirit—everywhere and in all things acting up to the

character of a truly good man, "foursquare and without a flaw." Granting, then, that the dispensations of chance are 12
many, some great and some small, it is manifest that the small things, whether good or bad, are of no weight in the scale of life; but that great ones when numerous will, if they are good, make life happier, since they tend to give grace to life and the use of them calls forth great and noble qualities, but if they be evil they mar and deface happiness, inasmuch as they bring pain with them, and frequently obstruct the exercise of function. And yet even here a man's nobility of character will shine out in the calm endurance with which he meets a multitude of great misfortunes, not through insensibility, but through nobility and greatness of soul.

But if, as we have said, a man's activities are the determin- 13
ing condition of his life, no one who is truly happy can ever become miserable, since he will never do what is hateful and base. For we hold that the truly good and wise man bears every kind of fortune with becoming dignity, and will always make the best of the circumstances, just as the good general will make the most of the troops at his command, and the shoemaker the best shoe that can be made out of the leather that is in stock, and so on with all the other crafts. And if 14
this be so, the happy man will never become miserable, though we cannot call him blessed if he suffers the fortune of Priam. . . .

We may conclude, then, with the following definition: 15
the happy man is he who manifests the highest excellence or virtue in living energy, and is duly furnished with external goods, not for any chance period of time, but for a full term of years. To which perhaps we should add, *who lives so throughout and dies as he has lived;* for the future is veiled from us, but happiness we assume to be the end, and to be everywhere and in all things final and complete.

IV.

THE SOUL AND ITS PARTS.

1 [I. xiii.] SINCE, then, happiness is an activity of the soul, in accordance with perfect virtue or excellence, we must now consider what excellence is. For this perhaps will 2 help us to understand better what happiness is. The true statesman seems to be chiefly concerned with virtue; for he 3 wishes to make the citizens good and law-abiding, as we see, for example, in the case of the Cretan and Spartan and 4 other such legislators. And if this inquiry belongs to political science, it is clear that it falls within the scope of our original object.

5 Our subject is, of course, *human* excellence or virtue; for it is human good and human happiness which we set out to 6 investigate. And by human excellence we mean not that of the body, but that of the soul; happiness being, as we have 7 seen, an activity of the soul. And if this be so, clearly the statesman ought to understand something about the nature of the soul (just as the physician who makes a speciality of the eye ought to know something of the body as a whole), all the more so as Politics is a higher study than Medicine. And, indeed, the best physicians devote a great deal of time 8 to physiological study. In the same way, then, the student of Politics must make a special study of psychology.

He must not, however, forget the purpose he has in view nor pursue the subject further than this requires. For to carry it further involves unnecessary labour. The subject 9
has been discussed elsewhere[1] in sufficient detail, and we may accept the results we there reached.

Thus we saw that the soul has two parts—an irrational and a rational. Whether these are separate, like the parts 10
of the body and other divisible things, or are only separable in thought—being inseparable, in fact, like the convex and the concave of a circle—we need not now inquire. Of the irrational element, again, one part, viz. the principle 11
of nourishment and growth, is common to all living things, plants as well as animals. For we may be certain that it is the same vital principle which manifests itself throughout in every organic thing, from the embryo up to the highest living forms, as it is more reasonable to suppose that this is so than that there is anywhere a *saltus* in nature. The excellence of this principle, then, is plainly 12
one that may be shared by all organic things, and is not peculiar to man. And this is confirmed by the fact that this part or faculty of the soul appears to be most active in sleep, when the difference between good and bad men is of least account, explaining the saying that during the half of life there is no difference between the happy and the miserable. Which is natural enough, for in sleep those 13
functions of the soul in respect to which we call it good or bad are latent, except in so far as faint stimuli from the senses penetrate consciousness and make the dreams of good men better than those of ordinary people. We 14
need not follow this further, but may dismiss the nutritive principle, whose excellence is not distinctive of our humanity.

[1] The reference is not apparently to a written, or at least to any extant work of Aristotle.

15 There seems, however, to be another element of the soul which is irrational, and yet which in a certain sense partakes of reason. For we praise the reason or the rational part of the soul, both in the continent and in the incontinent man, inasmuch as it exhorts them to take the course which is right and for the best. Yet there is clearly another and opposite principle in them, which is at war with reason, and resists it. For, just as a paralyzed limb is carried to the left when the patient wishes to move it to the right, so in the soul of the incontinent, their impulses run counter to
16 reason. The difference is that, whereas in the case of the body we see the refractory member, in the case of the soul it is invisible. None the less must we consider that there is an element in the soul which is opposed to reason, and
17 resists it, though in what sense it is distinct from reason we need not here inquire. Yet even this, as we have said, seems to share in reason. In the continent man, at any rate, it obeys reason; while in the man of perfect self-control, and in the courageous man we may say it is more obedient still, inasmuch as their whole nature is in harmony with reason.

18 The irrational element also falls into two parts—the vegetative and the appetitive. Of these the former does not participate in reason, whereas the appetitive, and the element of desire in general, partakes of it in a manner, *i.e.* so far as it listens to reason and submits to its guidance. When we say it participates in reason, or listens to reason, we mean it in the sense in which we might speak of a man's listening to reason from father or friends, not in the sense of listening to a mathematician's reasons. All advice, as well as all reproof and exhortation, further prove that there is a sense in which the irrational element is amenable to reason.

If, however, we prefer to say that this part belongs to 19
the rational element, we must then take the latter as falling into two parts—that which possesses reason in the proper sense and on its own right, and that which has an ear to its commands, as a man has to the commandments of his father.

The classification of the virtues is based upon this division. For we call some of them intellectual and others moral. Wisdom or philosophy, intelligence, and prudence we call intellectual; liberality and self-mastery we call moral virtues. For when we are speaking of a man's moral character we do not say that he is philosophical or intelligent, but gentle or self-controlled. Nevertheless, we praise the philosopher for the trained habit of his mind, and trained habits which we praise we call virtues.

V.

THE GENERAL NATURE OF VIRTUE.

1 [II. i.] Virtue, then, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual virtue depends chiefly for its origin and growth upon instruction, and hence requires experience and time. Moral virtue, on the other hand, is formed by habit, from which also, by a slight change, it derives its
2 name (*ἠθική* fr. *ἔθος*; cp. "moral" fr. *mores*). Hence it is clear that none of the moral virtues is implanted in us by nature. For no natural law can be altered by training. A stone, for instance, naturally falls downwards, and you could never train it to fly up into the air, even although you were to throw it up ten thousand times; nor could you train fire to burn downwards, nor bring any other thing through habituation to act in a manner contrary to its own nature.
3 The virtues, then, do not come by nature. Yet neither are they contrary to nature. We have a natural capacity for
4 acquiring them, but they are *developed* by habit. Another difference is that, in the case of natural endowments, we possess the faculty first, and afterwards exercise the function. The senses are an obvious example. We do not learn to see or to hear from frequent exercise of the eye or the ear. On the contrary, we have the faculty first, and then we use it; we do not acquire the faculty by using it. The virtues, on the contrary, we acquire by doing the actions, as in the analogous case of artistic skill. We learn an art by

doing what we wish to do when we have learned it: we become builders by building, and harpers by harping. In the same way, by doing just actions we become just; by doing continent and courageous actions, continent and courageous. This is attested by what occurs in states. 5
The law-giver makes the citizens good by training them in the habit of good behaviour. All legislators at least aim at doing so, although some by training badly fail of success, and it is this that makes the difference between good constitutions and bad.

Further, every virtue is produced and destroyed in the 6
same circumstances and by the same actions. Here, again, we have an analogy with the arts. It is by harping that good and bad harpers alike are produced, and this holds also of building and all other employments. By building well a man will become a good builder, by building badly a bad one. If this were not so there would be no need of 7
teaching; all would be born either good or bad at their trades. It is just the same in the case of the virtues. It is by our actions in our intercourse with our fellow-men that we become just or unjust, and by engaging in actions that imply danger, and accustoming ourselves to feel fear or confidence, we become courageous or cowardly. Similarly with regard to desire and anger: by conducting themselves in this way or that, in presence of these impulses, some men become continent and gentle, others incontinent and wrathful. In a word, habits of any kind spring from actions of the same kind. This is the reason why we ought to be 8
particular about the character of our actions, for habits vary with the actions by means of which they are formed. It is no matter of indifference, therefore, whether a man is trained from childhood to behave in this way or in that. On the contrary, it makes all the difference in the world.

1 [ii.] This being so, and ethical inquiry differing from others in not being undertaken in the interest of theory (for we are seeking not merely for a definition of virtue, but for the means of producing it, otherwise there would be little profit), we must inquire what we mean by good actions; for, as we have already said, it is action which determines our habits or character.

2 Now it is a common characteristic of all good actions that they have a certain order or proportion. We may take this as the starting-point of our theory, leaving for future investigation what we mean by the right order, or the right
3 proportion, and how it is related to the virtues. Let me, however, remind you again that a theory of conduct can be no more than an outline. It cannot go into detail. As we said at the outset, the form of the reasoning depends upon the subject-matter; and in matters of conduct there are no fixed rules as to what it is right to do, any more than there
4 are in the case of health and sickness. And if this is true of the theory of conduct in general, we are still less entitled to demand exactness with reference to the details of conduct. For these fall under no art or rule: the agent himself must consider the circumstances under which he is called upon to act, just as the doctor and the navigator have to do.
5 Notwithstanding these limitations we must try to render what help we can.

6 In the first place, then, we may observe that in matters of this sort excess and defect are alike fatal, as we may see (to illustrate the invisible from the visible) from the example of physical health and strength. Too much and too little exercise alike tend to undermine a man's strength, and in like manner too much or too little food and drink is equally ruinous to health, whereas the proper proportion
7 produces, increases, and preserves it. Just so in the case

of self-control and courage, and the other virtues. The man who shuns and fears everything, and never makes a stand, becomes a coward; while he who fears absolutely nothing, but will face anything, becomes foolhardy. Similarly, the man who indulges in every pleasure, and refrains from none, is a profligate; while he who shuns all pleasure (like the boor that he is) wants sensibility. We conclude, then, that self-control and courage are destroyed by excess and defect, but are preserved by the mean.

But further, not only are habits produced and developed 8
and destroyed on the same occasions and by the same process, but they tend also to realize themselves in the same circumstances. This is so in the case of palpable things like strength. For strength of body is acquired by taking plenty of food and doing plenty of work, and, on the other hand, the strong man has the greatest capacity in these ways. The same is the case with the virtues. By 9
abstaining from pleasure we acquire self-control, and when we have acquired it we have the greatest power of abstaining. And similarly with courage: accustoming ourselves to despise danger and to face it, we become courageous, and, on the other hand, when we have become courageous, we are best able to face danger.

[iii.] The sign that the habit has been formed we must 1
take to be the pleasure or the pain that attends the actions. The man who refrains from bodily pleasures, and takes pleasure in doing so, is the man of perfect self-mastery; the man who hates having to restrain himself is profligate. The man who not only faces dangers but rejoices in facing them, or at least feels no pain, is courageous; he who feels pain is a coward.

Pains and pleasures, indeed, may be said to be the chief concern in all that relates to morals. For, in the first

place, it is pleasure that tempts us to do what is wrong, and
2 pain which keeps us from doing what is right. And therefore, as Plato says, man needs to be so trained from childhood that he may find pleasure and pain in the right
3 objects. This is what true education means. Another reason for holding that pains and pleasures have an intimate connection with morality, is that we are here concerned with action and passion, and every action and passion is
4 attended by pain or pleasure. And a still further is that pains are employed in punishment. For they are a species of remedy, and remedies are the natural counteractives of the disease. Again, as previously said, every trained habit of the soul is closely related to all that acts upon it for good or ill. But it is by pursuing or avoiding pains and pleasures, either of a wrong kind, or at a wrong time or in the wrong manner, or going wrong in some other of the various distinguishable ways that bad characters are formed. Hence some people have defined virtue as a species of impassivity or apathy. They make a mistake, however, putting it in this unqualified way, and not adding the qualifying circumstances of manner, time, etc.

11 We may assume, then, that virtue is concerned with pains and pleasures; that it is increased by doing the actions by which it is produced, and, on the other hand, destroyed by actions of the opposite kind; and that it realizes itself in the kind of actions which have produced it.

1 [iv.] A difficulty, however, may here be raised, and we may be asked what we mean by saying that one must become just by doing just actions, and temperate by doing temperate actions. For if our acts are just and temperate, surely we are already temperate and just, as we should be grammatical and musical if in practice we obeyed the laws

of grammar and music. The answer is, in the first place, 2
that there is an ambiguity here even in the case of the arts.
For we may speak or write grammatically by chance, or at
the prompting of another. But a man will be grammatical
only if he does so as a grammarian, *i.e.* as a result of his own
knowledge of grammar. But, secondly, the analogy of the 3
arts is misleading. The products of art have a value in
themselves. It is therefore sufficient if they have a certain
quality of their own. In the case of the virtues, on the other
hand, actions are not called just or temperate if they are
merely actions of a certain kind, but only if they are the
outcome of a certain state of mind: in the first place,
if the agent knows what he is doing; secondly, if he
chooses to do it, and chooses it as *good;* thirdly, if his
action is the expression of a formed and stable character.
These conditions, with the exception of the first, viz. know-
ledge, are not taken into account in the case of works of art.
In the case of good conduct, on the other hand, knowledge
is of comparatively little importance, but the other conditions,
which depend upon the frequent performance of just and
temperate actions, are of no little importance: rather they
are all-important.

Acts, then, are said to be just and temperate when they 4
are such as the just and temperate man would do. And the
just and temperate man is not merely the man who acts
justly and temperately, but the man who does so in the
spirit of the just and temperate man. We were therefore 5
right in saying that a man is made just by acting justly, and
temperate by acting temperately. On the other hand, no
one who neglects such actions has the remotest chance of
ever becoming a good man. And yet the majority of 6
mankind do neglect them, taking refuge in talk instead,
under the impression that they have a philosophy of life

which will do the business for them. Like patients who listen attentively to what their physician says, but are careful to do nothing that he tells them, they have as little chance of getting good to their souls from their theories as these have of recovering their health by this kind of treatment.

VI.

THE SPECIFIC NATURE OF VIRTUE.

[II. vi.] It is not sufficient, however, to assign virtue or 1
excellence to the genus habit: we must indicate what species
of habit it is. We may lay it down that all excellence 2
perfects the condition of that of which it is the excellence,
and enables it to fulfil its function. Thus the excellence of
the eye makes both the eye good and its work good; for
it is the excellence of the eye which makes us see well.
Likewise, the excellence of a horse not only makes the
horse good, but makes it good at running, and carrying its
rider, and at awaiting the enemy. If, then, this is universally 3
true, it follows that the excellence or virtue of a man will be
the habit which makes the man good, and enables him to
perform his work or function well. We have already shown 4
how this will be accomplished; but we shall make it still
clearer if we now proceed to the specific nature of
virtue.

In respect to all quantities which are both continuous and
divisible, we may take a greater, a less, or an equal amount,
and that either of the quantity itself or relatively to ourselves,
the equal amount being a kind of mean between too much
and too little. Now by the mean of a thing itself we under- 5
stand that which is equidistant from each of the extremes,
and is one and the same for all; whereas by the mean

relatively to ourselves we mean that which is neither too much nor too little. The latter is not any single quantity,
6 nor is it the same for all. Thus if we call ten many, and two few, six will be the mean from the point of view of the object. For it exceeds two by the same amount as it falls
7 short of ten. This is the mean according to arithmetical proportion. But from the point of view of the subject it is different. For if ten pounds of food are too much for a man, and two are too little, the trainer in gymnastics will not order six pounds; for this may be too much or too little for the special case: for a Milo it may be too little, but for one who is beginning to train it may be too much.
8 And similarly in running and wrestling. We see, then, that the expert and connoisseur in every department tries to avoid excess and defect, but seeks for and selects the mean—the mean, that is, not of the thing itself, but relatively to us.

9 Science and knowledge, then, perfect function by keeping an eye upon the mean, and testing all results by it. And hence we declare of results which are excellent, that there is nothing either to add or subtract, implying that excess and defect destroy excellence while the mean preserves it, and that good artists, as we were saying, work with their eye upon the mean. If this is so, and if virtue is finer and better than any art, herein resembling nature herself, it will aim at the mean. The reader will of course understand that I am
10 speaking of moral virtue. For this is concerned with actions and passions which admit of excess and defect, and of a mean. Thus, in feeling fear, confidence, desire, anger, pity, and pleasure and pain generally, we may exceed or fall short,
11 and both are wrong. But to experience these feelings at the right time, in reference to the right things, towards the right people, from the right motive, and in the right manner,

is a mean and *best*—the sure test of excellence. In like 12
manner there is excess and defect and a mean in actions.
And virtue is concerned with actions as well as passions,
in both of which excess and defect are wrong, while the
mean is praised and is what is right. But when an act is
praised and is right we have virtue, which we may there- 13
fore define as a species of mean or at least as aiming at the
mean.

Moreover, as there are many ways of going wrong (for evil, 14
as the Pythagoreans maintain, is infinite, but good is finite),
whereas there is only one way of going right (and this is why
one is easy, the other difficult: it is easy to miss the mark,
but difficult to hit it), this is another reason for holding
that excess and defect are a mark of vice, while the mean is
a mark of virtue.

"Single the path of the good, to evil there's many a broad way."

Virtue, then, is a habit of choosing what is the mean relatively 15
to ourselves, as it is determined by reason, or as the wise
man would determine it. It is the mean between two vices,
one of excess, the other of defect, one class of vices falling 16
short of what is right in feeling and action, the other going
to excess; whereas virtue finds and chooses the middle
course.

When, therefore, we are seeking a logical definition of 17
virtue we must describe it as a mean. But we must
remember that when we look at it from the point of view of
what is best and "well done," it is itself an extreme. More- 18
over, the fact that every action and every feeling does not
admit of a mean, suggests a further qualification. For some
feelings are stigmatized by their very name as bad: as, for
example, malice, immodesty, envy. And the same is true of
actions, *e.g.* adultery, theft, murder. All actions of this kind,

by their very name, imply that they are evil, nor do they admit of excess and defect. It is impossible ever to be right in respect of them. They are always wrong. There is no right person, right time, right manner, in respect to which it is lawful, *e.g.* to commit adultery. To do any of them is simply
19 and entirely wrong. To deny this is like maintaining that there is a mean, an excess, and a defect in injustice or in cowardice or in incontinence. If this were so, we should require to have a mean of the excess and of the defect, and similarly
20 an excess of excess, and a defect of defect. But just as there is no extreme and defect in self-control and courage, the middle here being so to speak an end, so there is neither a mean nor an excess or defect of the actions we are speaking of. They are wrong in whatever way they are done. For it is a general principle that there is neither any mean of excess or defect, nor any excess and defect of the mean.

1 [vii.] It is not, however, enough to give a general definition; we must try to apply it to details. In ethical discussions universal statements are apt to be vague; the proof of them is in the application. For conduct is always concerned with particulars, and any theory which is advanced must be one that fits the facts. And here we may follow the ordinary list.

2 Courage is a mean with regard to fear and confidence. Of the extremes on the side of excess, the man who has too little fear has no name (many of these types are in this condition); the man who has too much confidence is foolhardy. On the other hand, the man who is timid in excess, or who falls short in confidence, is a coward.

3 In respect to pleasures and pains—though all pleasures are not included, and it is less concerned with pains—the mean is temperance; the extreme on the side of excess

is profligacy. There can hardly be said to be persons who are defective in sensibility to pleasure. Hence we have no name for such persons, but we may call them insensible.

The mean in giving and taking money is liberality; the 4
excess and defect are respectively prodigality and illiberality. Men exceed and fall short in contrary directions. The prodigal exceeds in giving, but falls short in taking. Whereas 5
the illiberal man exceeds in taking, but falls short in giving. (At present I am only giving a rough outline and summary; we shall go more fully into details presently.) Besides these 6
there are other types of character concerned with money. Thus there is a mean called magnificence—the magnificent man differing from the liberal man in having to do with great matters, while the latter has to do with small. The excess here is bad taste or vulgarity, and the defect meanness, which again differ from the qualities similarly related to liberality. The nature of the difference we shall examine hereafter.

With regard to honour and dishonour, there is a mean 7
called magnanimity, or high-mindedness, a species of excess called vanity, and a defect called pusillanimity or little-mindedness. High-mindedness being concerned with great 8
honours, there is a quality which bears the same relation to it as liberality does to magnificence, and is the corresponding virtue with respect to small honours. For it is possible to desire honour in a right way, and, again, to desire it too much or too little. The man who desires it in excess is the ambitious man; he who is defective in the desire for it is unambitious. The man who is in the mean, however, has no name. The qualities, moreover, are without names, except the quality of the ambitious man, which we call ambition—with the consequence that the extremes lay claim to the intermediate area, and we sometimes call

the man who is in the mean ambitious, and sometimes unambitious, and sometimes we praise the ambitious and
9 sometimes the unambitious man. The reason why we do so will be explained hereafter. Meantime, let us finish the enumeration as we have begun it.

10 There is an excess, a defect, and a mean in anger. These can hardly be said to have names, but we may call the man who is in the mean gentle, and the mean itself gentleness. Of the extremes we may call the man who goes to excess wrathful, and the vice wrathfulness; the man who is defective spiritless, and the defect spiritlessness.

11 There are other three virtues which have a certain resemblance to one another, but which yet are different from one another. They are all means in the intercourse of words and actions. But they differ in that the first has to do with truthfulness in such intercourse, the other two with pleasantness. Of the latter, one is displayed in amusements, the other in the affairs of life generally. On all of these I must say a word with the view of bringing out more clearly that the mean is everywhere praised, while the extremes are neither praised nor right, but on the contrary are blamed. The greater number of them indeed have no name. But we must try, as in the case of the others, to assign names to them, both for the sake of clearness and coherence of statement.

12 (*a*) In respect to truth, the man who is in the mean we may call truthful, and the mean truthfulness. Pretence, on the other hand, when it overstates, we call boasting, and the pretender a boaster; when it understates, irony, and the man who uses it, ironical.

13 (*b*) With regard to pleasantness in amusements, the man who is in the mean is playful, and the quality playfulness. The excess is buffoonery, and the man who goes to excess

a buffoon. The man who is defective is a boor, and the habit boorishness. With regard to pleasantness in life generally, the man who is sweet and pleasant in the right way is friendly, and the mean is friendliness; the man who goes to excess, if for no end at all, is complaisant, if for his own ends, a flatterer; while he who is defective in this quality, and always makes himself unpleasant, is quarrelsome and disagreeable.

There are, moreover, ways of observing the mean in 14
respect to the feelings and their immediate accompaniments. Thus, although shame is not a virtue, yet we praise the modest man. For where we may expect a man to feel shame one is said to observe the mean, and another to exceed, the bashful man being one who is shy of everything. The man on the other hand who has too little shame, or is shy of nothing, is shameless; while the man who is in the mean is modest.

Righteous indignation is the mean between envy and 15
malevolence—sentiments which consist of the pain and pleasure which come to our friends through the accidents of life. The man who feels pain at undeserved good fortune is rightly indignant. The envious man goes further, and feels pain at all good fortune. The malevolent man, so far from being pained, actually rejoices in the misfortunes of his friends. But I shall have another opportunity of discussing these qualities.

With regard to justice, as there are several kinds of it, I shall hereafter distinguish between the various forms and define in what sense they are means. And similarly when we come to the intellectual virtues.

[II. IX.] Thus we have seen that moral virtue is a mean, 1
and in what sense it is so. It is a mean between two

vices, the one of excess, the other of defect, and it is so because it aims at the middle course in feeling and action.
2 Hence it is a hard task to be good. For it is a hard task to find the mean in anything, just as it is not every one who can find the centre of a circle. A man must know how to do it. It is easy enough to get angry, to give away or lay out money. Any one can do that. But to give to the right person the right amount, at the right time, for the right object, and in the right manner, is by no means easy, nor is it every one who can do it. This is the reason why right conduct is rarely found, and is praiseworthy and a fine thing.
3 It follows from this that he who would hit the mean must begin by shunning that which is the more opposed to it, following the advice Calypso gives to Ulysses—

"Away from the surf and the breakers see that thou pilot the good ship."

For of the extremes, one is a more dangerous error than the
4 other. Since, then, it is extremely difficult to hit the mean, we must, if we fail, be content with the "second best course" and choose the lesser evil, and this will best be done in the way we have mentioned, viz. by considering what we ourselves as individuals are most addicted to, different people having different temptations. And here we shall be guided by
5 the amount of pleasure or pain we have in anything. We must then lend ourselves a pull in the opposite direction, since by drawing far away from the error we shall be more likely to arrive at the mean, as one sees a man doing when
6 he is trying to straighten a bent stick. Against pleasure and the pleasurable especially we must always be on our guard. For there is not one of us who has not received a bribe to give a wrong verdict in its favour. We must therefore take the attitude towards pleasure that the elders took towards

Helen, and be always repeating their maxim: "If we send her away we shall sin the less."

Without going further, then, we may say that if we act thus 7
we shall best be able to strike the mean. Yet this, it must be confessed, is difficult at the best, and all the more in the actual complexities of life. Thus it is not easy to decide how, and with whom, and on what account, and for how long we ought to be angry. And with the best intentions we sometimes praise those who are not angry enough, and call them gentle; at other times we say of the wrathful that they have a manly spirit. In short, we do not blame the man 8
who deflects in a slight degree from the straight path, either in the direction of excess or defect, but only the man who deflects widely, and in a marked manner. But to what degree and extent a man may go wrong without incurring blame it is not easy to define theoretically, any more than on other occasions when we have to rely upon intuitive perception. In such cases it all depends upon the circumstances, and these are judged of intuitively as they arise.

So much, then, is clear that the mean state is always praise- 9
worthy, but that we must sometimes lean to the excess, sometimes to the defect, in order that we may the more easily hit the mean and do what is right.

VII.

COURAGE.

1 [III. VI.] PROCEEDING now to the discussion of the virtues in detail with the view of determining their general character, together with the field and manner of their exercise. . . . we may begin with Courage.

We have already seen that courage is a mean with
2 regard to fear and confidence. It is clear that the object of fear is what is fearful, *i.e.* evil in general. Hence the
3 definition of fear as the expectation of evil. Although all evils—disgrace, poverty, disease, friendlessness, death—are objects of fear, yet courage is not manifested with respect to all of them. For there are some things which one ought to fear, which it is noble to fear and disgraceful not to fear, *e.g.* dishonour. The man who fears dishonour shows a right spirit of self-respect; he who does not fear it is shameless. Yet he is called courageous by some people by a metaphor, seeing that he has a certain resemblance to the courageous
4 man, who is in a sense devoid of fear. Poverty, on the other hand, and disease ought not to be feared nor generally anything that is not the result of vice or of one's own act. Yet the man who has no fear of these is not courageous —although he also is called so by analogy. For some who are cowards amid the dangers of war are liberal men, and
5 look the loss of money bravely in the face. Nor, on the

other hand, is a man a coward who fears violence to wife or child, or the pain of envy or anything of this kind. Nor, again, is a man said to be courageous if he keeps up his spirits in the prospect of the lash.

What, then, are the objects of fear which the courageous 6
man faces? Are they not the greatest? for no one surpasses him in withstanding what is really terrible. But the king of terrors is death. For death is the end of all, and after death it is thought there is neither good nor evil for a man. But there would appear to be even kinds of death 7
in respect to which it is impossible to show true courage. For instance, death by drowning, or by disease. What, 8
then, is the proper object of courage? Is it not death in the noblest cause, viz. death in the battlefield? For here the danger is the greatest and is faced for the noblest object. And this is confirmed by the honours which 9
courage receives in free states and at the hand of kings.

A man, then, is called courageous in the proper sense 10
when he shows himself fearless at the prospect of death in a noble cause and in all sudden emergencies that involve death—conditions which are present in a special degree in war. I do not mean to say that a man cannot show 11
courage at sea or in sickness. But his courage will not be of the same kind as that of the ordinary sailor. For the landsman is quick to despair of safety and cannot bear to think of such a death, whereas the experience of the sailor makes him always sanguine. Moreover, men are courageous 12
in circumstances where prowess may be shown and where death is noble—neither of which conditions are present in the forms of death just alluded to.

[vii.] Men differ as to the things which they fear, but 1
there are things which it is beyond human nature not to fear. These no man of sense will regard without terror, but

dangers which are not overwhelming differ in magnitude
2 and degree, as also do things that give courage. The courageous man is he who, as far as man can be, is undismayed by danger. Fearful things he will indeed fear, but he will face them as he ought, and as reason enjoins, for the sake of a noble cause. For this is what virtue means.
3 But it is possible to fear such things too much or too little, and, again, to regard with terror things which are not
4 terrible at all. And here a man may go wrong by fearing what it is not right to fear, or by fearing in the wrong way, or at the wrong time, and so on. And similarly with regard to things that give courage.
5 The man, then, who governs his fear and likewise his confidence aright, facing dangers it is right to face, and for the right cause, in the right manner, and at the right time, is courageous. For the courageous man regulates both his feelings and his actions with due regard to the circumstances
6 and as reason and proportion suggest. But the end of every action is to exhibit the quality for the sake of which the trained habit exists. Now, courage is a fine thing in the man who has it. And hence we may infer that this is the end of the courageous act, and if so the essence of it, for the essence of a thing is to be looked for in its end or function. The courageous man, therefore, faces danger and does the courageous thing because it is a fine thing to do.
7 Of the extremes, that on the side of fearlessness has no name. (We have already seen that there are several in like case.) A man might be described as a madman or insensate if he feared nothing at all, not even earthquakes or breakers, as they tell of the Celts.*

* "The Celts who dwell by the ocean deem it base to flee from a falling wall or house, and when a flood-tide comes in from the sea, taking

He, on the other hand, whose confidence in circumstances of danger is excessive is the foolhardy man, who is likely 8
enough to be a swaggerer, and to pretend to courage which he has not got. He wishes, at any rate, to appear to be what the courageous man actually is in the presence of danger, and therefore imitates him as far as he can. And so your foolhardy man is usually a coward at heart. He 9
swaggers where he can with safety, but he backs out when the real danger comes.

The man whose timidity is excessive is the coward, for 10
he fears the wrong thing, in the wrong way: in fact, his whole attitude is wrong. He is also defective in confidence. But it is his excess of fear that betrays him, rather than his want of confidence. The coward, then, is the sort of 11
man who easily loses hope, for he fears everything. The courageous man is just the opposite of this. For confidence is the mark of a hopeful man.

The cowardly, the foolhardy, and the courageous nature 12
then exhibit themselves in the same circumstances, but each in a different manner. The former goes to excess, or falls short; while the last is in the mean and right. The foolhardy man, moreover, is precipitate: eager before danger, when the danger comes he is apt to fail; whereas the courageous man is keen in action, but quiet beforehand.

Courage, then, as already said, is a mean in respect to all 13
that inspires fear or confidence in war. The brave man chooses to stand his ground because it is noble to do so, or because not to do so would be base. But to seek death as an escape from poverty, or love, or any other painful experience is no mark of courage, but, on the contrary,

up arms against it, they stand their ground till they are overwhelmed by it, that they may not by taking to flight seem to be afraid of death." —Extract from Stobæus.

of cowardice. For it is pure effeminacy to try to escape trouble, and the suicide braves death not because it is noble, but in order to escape an evil.

1 [viii.] True courage is such as I have described it, but there are five other kinds, which, though they bear the name, are spurious. First there is civil courage. This bears the closest resemblance to the genuine thing. For citizens are known to face danger on account of the penalties of the law and the reproaches of their fellows, or, again, for the sake of the honours that will be bestowed on them. This is why the citizens of states in which cowardice is held in dishonour while courage is honoured, appear to be the most
2 courageous. Homer gives us examples, *e.g.* in Hector, when he says—

> "Polydamas will first reproach me;"

and in Diomede—

> "Amongst the Trojans Hector then will speak,
> 'The son of Tydeus terror-struck of me——'"

3 This form bears the closest resemblance to the courage we have described, because it comes of virtue, having its source in shame and in a desire for honour, which is a noble thing; or, again, in fear of disgrace, which is ignoble.
4 In the same class I should place all those who show courage under constraint of their superiors, but on a lower level, inasmuch as they act from fear, not from shame. What they seek to avoid is not disgrace but pain. They are constrained by the threats of their commanders, as the army is by Hector—

> "And whosoever he be that skulketh afar from the battle,
> Ne'er shall his carcase escape the devouring teeth of the dogs."

And the same thing is done by commanders who order 5
their men to stand, and who strike them if they give way,
and by those who draw up their men in front of ditches,
and the like. They all use constraint. But true courage
is rooted not in compulsion, but in honour.

In the second place, experience in any field has the look 6
of courage, and this explains why Socrates held that courage
was knowledge. Different people show this kind of courage
in different fields. Those who show it in war are the
regular troops. For there are many false alarms in war,
and this the regulars best know. They therefore *appear*
courageous because the other troops do not understand the
real state of matters. Moreover, they are more capable 7
both in attack and defence because of their experience,
and because they not only have the weapons best adapted
for attack and defence, but they best know how to use them.
They thus have the advantage which armed men have over 8
unarmed, or trained athletes over untrained. For in athletic
contests, also, it is not the most courageous who are
the best fighters, but the strongest, and those who are in
best condition. On the other hand, professional soldiers 9
turn cowards when there is real danger, and when they are
inferior in numbers or in equipment. They are then the
first to fly, while the citizen soldier stands and dies at his
post, as happened in the engagement at the Hermæum.*
For he deems flight a dishonour, and death is preferable
to safety purchased on such terms. On the other hand,

* "The citadel of Coronea, a town in Bœotia, having been treacherously surrendered to Onomarchus the Phocian commander, an engagement took place in an open place called the Hermæum, in which the Coroneans themselves, who had shut the gates behind them so as to render retreat impossible, stood their ground and were cut to pieces, while their Bœotian auxiliaries on the fall of one of their commanders took to flight at the beginning of the battle"—*Scholiast* (condensed).

the regulars who at the first faced the enemy because they thought they were stronger, on closer acquaintance take to flight, because they fear death more than disgrace. But true courage is quite different from this.

10 Thirdly, the term "courage" is sometimes applied to rage, and it is true that those who act under the influence of passion, like wild beasts rushing on the hunter who wounds them, appear to be courageous. The reason being that courageous men are actually men of quick passion. For passion, more than anything else, makes men rush on dangers. As Homer says, "he put might in his spirit," "he waked his wrath and his spirit," "keen was the wrath in his nostrils," "fired was
11 his blood;" all indicating the stir and rush of passion. The truth is that, while the truly courageous man acts for the honour of it, with passion for his ally, wild beasts are driven on by pain, attacking when they are struck or alarmed, and not attacking when they are safe in the bush. There is no courage, then, in rushing on danger under the stimulus of pain or passion, and without foresight of the grounds for alarm. On this principle we should have to call hungry donkeys courageous, inasmuch as they refuse to leave off eating even when you beat them. Adulterers, moreover, often do venturous things under the influence of lust or passion.
12 The courage of passion, I admit, is the most natural, and when moral choice and the proper object are added, we have true courage. But men who are in a rage suffer pain, and are pleased when they avenge themselves, and when they fight for these reasons we call them pugnacious, but not courageous. For they act from passion, not for the honour of it, or as reason directs. All the same, they bear a certain resemblance to the courageous man.

13 Fourthly, we must distinguish the courageous from the sanguine man, who from being frequently victorious

grows confident in danger. They have a strong family resemblance, as they are both confident. But the former is confident for the reason already named, the latter because he thinks he is the best man and will take no harm. A 14
man behaves in the same way when he gets drunk, for he then grows sanguine. When, however, things turn out 15
badly the sanguine man runs away. On the other hand, we saw that it is the mark of courage to face what not only is terrible to a man, but appears to him to be so, because it is noble to do it and not to do it is ignoble. And this is why it needs greater courage to be fearless and undismayed amid sudden than expected alarm. The less time for preparation, the more clearly is conduct the outcome of formed character. Where there is time for deliberation a man's choice may be the result of reasoning and calculation, whereas sudden emergencies are a test of character.

Lastly, a man may appear to be courageous when he is 16
only ignorant. Such a person is not very far removed from the sanguine man, but he is inferior to him in not having any opinion of himself as the latter has. Hence, while the sanguine man stands his ground for a time, the man who has been deceived, so soon as he discovers or suspects that things are not what he thought, runs away. This was the case with the Argives when they fell upon the Lacedæmonians, mistaking them for Sicyonians.* We have now discussed the 17
character of the courageous man, and those types which have the appearance without the reality of courage.

[ix.] Though courage has to do with fear and confidence, 1
it is not equally concerned with both, having more to do with occasions of fear. For it is the man who is undismayed, and behaves as he ought in the presence of danger, whom

* See above, p. 107.

we take as the type of courage, rather than the man who
2 does so on occasions that inspire confidence. And so, as has been said, a man is called courageous for enduring pain. Hence courage is a painful thing, and is rightly praised. For it is harder to endure pain than to abstain from pleasure.
3 I do not mean to say that the end of courage is not pleasant, but the pleasure is concealed by the attendant circumstances, as happens also in contests of strength. Boxers, for instance, find the idea of the end or object for which they strive, viz. the crown or the honour, pleasant; but they find the blows and all the labour grievous, and full of pain to flesh and blood. And because the toil is great, while
4 the prize is small, it seems to bring little pleasure. If this, then, is the case with courage, the brave man will look on death and wounds with pain and repulsion, but he will endure them because it is noble to do so, and ignoble not to do so. And the more he is endowed with every virtue and every happiness, the more grievous will he feel death to be. For to such a man life has the highest value, and he knows that he is losing the greatest of goods, and this is painful. But he is none the less courageous on this account, perhaps all the more so, because he chooses a noble deed in war in
5 preference to those good things. From which it follows that pleasure does not accompany the exercise of all the
6 virtues, except in so far as the object is attained. It is, however, quite possible that it is not men of this sort who make the best regulars, but those who, though not so courageous, have nothing to lose. Such men are ready to face every danger, and to risk their lives for small gain.

7 So much for courage. It will not be difficult to gather a general idea of its nature from what has been said.

VIII.

TEMPERANCE.

[III. X.] AFTER courage comes Temperance, for these two are 1
the virtues which are concerned with the irrational elements in our nature. We have already seen that temperance is a mean with respect to pleasures, being concerned in a less degree, and in a different way, with the corresponding pains. It is in respect to pleasures, also, that profligacy manifests itself. Let us now try to determine the nature of the pleasures in question.

We may distinguish pleasures of the body from pleasures 2
of the soul, *e.g.* those of gratified ambition or of knowledge. The man who loves honour or knowledge takes pleasure in the object of his desire, although it is the mind and not the body which is affected. But we do not call a man temperate or profligate with respect to such pleasures. Nor, again, with respect to any of the other pleasures which are not of the body. Thus we call the man who loves gossip and talk, or who spends his days on trifles, a babbler, not a profligate. Nor, again, do we apply the term to the man who takes the loss of money or friends too much to heart. Temperance is concerned with bodily 3
pleasures, though not with all even of these. For those who delight in using their eyes, *e.g.* in looking at colours or forms or paintings, are not said to be temperate or profligate, although there would appear to be a right way of taking

delight in these things also, as well as a possibility of
4 taking too much or too little pleasure in them. Similarly with regard to the pleasures of hearing. No one would call a man who takes an excessive delight in music or the stage, profligate; nor, again, the man who takes a proper
5 pleasure in these temperate. And the same is true of smell, unless we take association into account. For there is no profligacy in being fond of the smell of apples, or roses, or incense, although there may be in being fond of the smell of perfumes and savoury dishes. The profligate takes pleasure in the latter because it is suggestive of things he
6 lusts after, and even others besides gluttons take pleasure in the smell of food when they are hungry. It is the dwelling upon such delights that marks the profligate man, and this comes of making them an object of desire.
7 Even among the brutes the pleasure derived from these senses comes from suggestion. It is not the scent of the hare that delights the dog, but the meal that is suggested by it. Similarly, a lion delights in eating the ox, not in hearing it low. The lowing tells him the ox is near, and he therefore appears to take delight in it for itself. So, again, it is not the sight of "a stag or a wild goat," but the prospect of a dinner that delights him.

8 Temperance and profligacy, then, are concerned with such pleasures as are shared in by the lower animals. This is why we speak of such pleasures, viz. those of touch and
9 taste, as slavish and bestial. With taste, however, they are concerned only in a small degree, if at all. For it is by taste that we distinguish flavours, as, for instance, in testing wines or seasoning dishes. But it is not the fine discrimination that gives delight, at any rate to the profligate, but the actual enjoyment of the object which in the case of meats and drinks and so-called sexual pleasure depends

upon touch. This is why the gourmand in the story wished 10
that his throat were longer than a crane's, showing that he
relied for the pleasure of eating upon the sense of touch.
The sense, then, with which profligacy is concerned is the
most universal of all, and the vice itself is rightly held to be
a shameful one, inasmuch as it belongs to our animal rather
than our human nature. To take delight in such things, 11
and to prefer them to anything else, is brutish. Yet even
here we must except the more manly pleasures of touch,
such as those of rubbing and of the warm bath in the
gymnasium. For the sensations of touch which the profligate
man cultivates are not spread over the whole of the body,
but confined to particular parts.

[xi.] If we look at human desires we see that some are 1
universal, others individual and acquired. Thus the desire
for food is natural and universal. Every one when he is
hungry desires food, solid or liquid—sometimes both—and,
as Homer says, the marriage couch when young and strong.
But every one does not desire a particular kind of food, nor
the same kind. Hence, such desires appear to be individual 2
and peculiar. Not that they have not a touch of nature in
them. For different things are naturally pleasant to different
people, and there are some things which every one prefers.

Now, in respect to the natural desires, few people go 3
wrong, and when they do it is usually in the one direction—
that of excess. For to eat and drink whatever comes to
hand to repletion is to exceed nature in point of quantity, as
the satisfaction of a natural desire is the mere filling up of a
want. Hence, the name "greedy-bellies" applied to people
who fill themselves too full. It is a slavish vice. On the 4
other hand, in the case of preferences for particular plea-
sures there are many ways of going wrong, and many
actually do err. For when we say that a man is fond

of a pleasure, we mean either that he likes what he ought not, or that he likes it more than is commonly done, or in a way that is not right—the profligate being one who goes to excess in all these respects. For he is fond of some abominable things which he ought not to be fond of, and of others, which are right enough in themselves, he is fonder than he ought to be or than people generally are.

5 We see, then, that excess in pleasures is profligate and blameworthy. Looking at it from the side of pain we do not call a man temperate for facing pains as the courageous man does, nor, again, profligate for failing to do so. But we call a man profligate for feeling more pain than he ought at missing a pleasure (the pleasure gives him pain!), and temperate when he feels no pain in going without or in refraining from a pleasure.

6 The profligate, then, lusts after everything that gives pleasure, or that gives it in the highest degree, and is so led away by his lusts that he chooses such things in preference to everything else. And so he is tortured with pain both when he fails to get them and when he merely lusts after them (for desire itself involves pain), absurd as it seems to be tortured for the sake of pleasure.

7 Those who are defective on the side of pleasure, and take less delight in things than they ought to, are extremely rare. Insensibility of this kind is inhuman, even the brutes distinguishing different kinds of food, liking some, disliking others. A being who took no pleasure in anything, but found everything alike, would be very far from being a man; there is, indeed, no name for such a being, as he is never found.

8 The temperate man is moderate in all these things. He takes no pleasure in those things in which the profligate most delights, rather despising them, nor generally in

things that are wrong, nor very much in the pleasures of touch and taste at all. He feels no pain in being without such things, nor does he desire them. If he does, it is in a moderate degree, not more than he ought, nor at the wrong time, nor wrongly in any way. But things which, besides being pleasant, make for health or good condition, he will desire in a moderate degree and in the right way. Other things, too, he will desire in so far as they are not injurious or incompatible with his idea of honour or beyond his means. The man who desires them in spite of everything, loves his pleasures more than it is fitting he should; whereas the temperate man feels towards them as reason directs. . . .

[xii.] The term "profligate" or "unchastened" is applied 5
also to children when they are naughty; for there is a certain similarity between the profligate and the naughty child. Which of these uses is the primary one we need not inquire, though it is clear that the later use must come from the earlier. But the metaphor itself is apt enough, as every- 6
thing that is drawn in the direction of what is disgraceful, and grows apace, needs chastening and correction, and these traits are more strongly marked in children and in the appetites than in anything else. For children live by impulse and appetite, and the desire for pleasure is most pronounced in them. If, then, this element is not obedient 7
and subject to the governing power it will go to great lengths, inasmuch as unreasonable people have an insatiable longing for pleasure regardless of its source, and the indulgence of desire fosters the innate tendency, until, perhaps, waxing powerful and violent, the desires cast reason out altogether. And so it is well that they should be few and moderate, and in no respect antagonistic to reason. (This is 8
what we mean by being amenable and "chastened.") And

just as a child should live according to the directions of his teacher, so the appetites should be subject to reason.
9 Hence the appetites of the temperate man must be in harmony with reason. For the aim of both is ideal excellence: the temperate man desiring the right things in the right way and at the right time, and reason enjoining the same.

IX.

IMPERFECT SELF-CONTROL.

[VII. i.] We must now say something of incontinence and also of continence, treating them as neither specifically the same as virtue and vice, nor yet as generically different. . . . Now, it is commonly thought that the continent man is one who stands by his reckonings, and the incontinent one who loses hold of them, and that the incontinent man knows that an action is bad and yet is impelled by passion to do it; while the continent man, knowing that his desires are bad, is impelled by reason to resist their lead. 4 6

[ii.] But it may be asked how can a man while judging rightly yet act incontinently? Some philosophers have maintained that it is impossible if he really knows what he is doing. Thus Socrates thought that it would be strange if, when he had real knowledge, a man should be mastered and dragged about by something else, like a slave. Socrates indeed contested the whole position, maintaining that there was no such thing as incontinence. No one acts contrary to what is best when he knows it. It is only ignorance that makes him do it. 1

Now, this doctrine evidently conflicts with experience, and with regard to the passion which sways the incontinent man if it really is a case of ignorance we must ask what kind of ignorance it is. For it is clear that he who acts incontinently does not think it the best thing before the passion seizes him. 2

3 There are others, again, who partly agree and partly differ from Socrates. They admit that nothing can prevail over *knowledge*, but they do not admit that a man never acts contrary so what he *thinks* best, and therefore maintain that when the incontinent man is overcome by his pleasures he has merely an opinion, but not knowledge. . . .

1 [iii.] We have then to inquire whether the incontinent act with or without knowledge, and what knowledge here 3 means. . . . The argument that it is true opinion and not knowledge against which they act incontinently, is irrelevant, for sometimes a man who merely has an opinion has no doubt about it, but thinks he has exact knowledge. . . .

5 Knowledge, however, is used in two different senses: we say that a man knows when he possesses knowledge but fails to use it, and again when he uses it. Possessing knowledge, therefore, of what is best to be done which is not present to consciousness, will be one thing; possessing knowledge which is consciously present will be quite another. Only in the latter sense will it seem strange that a man should act contrary to knowledge.

6 But again, rational judgment is founded on *two* premises, and there is therefore nothing to prevent a man knowing both, yet acting contrary to his knowledge if he uses the universal only, but not the particular. For all conduct is concerned with particular cases.

10 Moreover, universals themselves differ. . . . When, then, you have on one side the universal forbidding you to taste, and on the other the universal that "all sweet things are pleasant," with the particular "this is sweet," and the latter is effectively present and supported by appetite; while the former bids you avoid, appetite urges you to take it, for appetite tends to pass into muscular movement. Thus there is a sense in which it is under the influence of reason and

opinion that a man acts incontinently—an opinion, however, which is opposed to right reason, not in itself, but only accidentally, inasmuch as it is the appetite and not the 11
opinion that is really opposed to it. This is the reason why brutes cannot be incontinent: they have no universal judgments, but only images and memories of particulars. . . .

[x.] The incontinent man, then, has knowledge, not as 3
one who both knows and uses his knowledge, but as one who is asleep or drunk. He acts voluntarily (for in a sense he knows both what he is doing and what his object is in doing it), and yet he is not a bad man. For his moral purpose is good, so that he is only half bad. Nor is he unjust, for he does not act from design, seeing that he sometimes swerves from his resolutions and sometimes from melancholy makes no resolutions at all. The incontinent man, then, is like a city which always decrees the right thing and has excellent laws, but never carries them into execution, as Anaxandrides satirically says—

"So willed the State that nothing recked of laws."

The bad man, on the contrary, is like a city that carries its 4
laws into execution, but whose laws are bad.

X.

THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES: PRUDENCE.

4 [VI. i.] In dividing the virtues of the soul we saw that one class are virtues of the moral character, another of the intellect. We have already discussed the moral virtues. Let us now go on to the other class, glancing first at the psychological basis of the distinctions to be noticed.

5 We have already seen that the soul consists of two parts—the rational and the irrational. We must now make a similar division of the rational part, and note that it also is twofold. There is, first, the faculty by which we apprehend those elements of reality which depend upon unalterable principles; and, secondly, that by which we apprehend contingent reality. For since there is a certain similarity and affinity between knowledge and its object, we must suppose that generically different faculties of the soul take cognizance of
6 objects which are generically different. We may call the former of these the scientific, the latter the calculative reason. For deliberation and calculation are the same thing, and no one deliberates about things that cannot be otherwise than they are, so that the calculative reason may be considered one part of the rational element in the soul. Our problem now is to inquire what each of these faculties is in its highest development, for this will be its virtue or excellence, —a virtue which we must never forget is relative to its proper function. . . .

1 [vii.] "Wisdom" is a term we apply to those who have consummate skill in the arts, as when we call Phidias wise in sculpture, or Polyclitus in portraiture, meaning nothing

more by wisdom than excellence in a particular art. But 2
there are some people whom we consider wise in an absolute sense, and without reference to any particular thing. This is the sense in which Homer uses the term in the Margites—

"Him have the gods given wisdom neither in spade nor in plough-share,
Neither in aught whatsoe'er."

Wisdom in this sense clearly stands for the highest kind of scientific knowledge. The wise man is he who is familiar 3
not only with what may be deduced from first principles, but with the truth of first principles themselves. So that wisdom or philosophy may be defined as *the combination of intuitive reason and science, or as scientific knowledge of the most precious things, with the crown of perfection, so to speak, upon it.* For surely it would be absurd to call the political faculty or the practical reason the highest of our faculties, unless we are prepared to maintain that man is the highest product of creation.

Now, if what is good and wholesome is one thing for men, 4
another thing for fishes, while whiteness and straightness preserve the same character wherever they are found, there must be many different kinds of prudence, but only one kind of wisdom. For we call the being which has a good eye for its own affairs prudent, and are ready to trust them to its charge. Hence, we apply the term "prudent" to some animals—those, namely, which are observed to exhibit a certain amount of foresight in the conduct of their lives. It is clear, moreover, that wisdom and statesmanship are different from one another. For if we were to call knowledge of individual advantage wisdom, there must be many kinds of it, as there is no one science concerned with what is good for every species of animal, any more than there is one art of healing for all created beings. And if it be argued

that man is high above all the rest of the animate world, this does not alter the case. There are other things in the universe of a nature far more divine than his, as, for example,
5 the starry heavens of which the universe is built. From all which it is clear that wisdom is a combination of science and the speculative reason, directed to the noblest objects in creation. And this is why we call Anaxagoras, Thales, and other philosophers wise but not prudent, seeing that they are ignorant of what is to their own advantage. We say that the knowledge which they possess is strange, wonderful, recondite, superhuman, but useless because they do not study what is good for man.

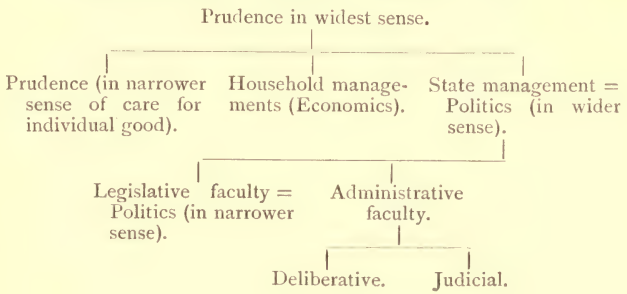
6 The field of prudence, on the other hand, is human affairs and things on which counsel may be taken; for it is the chief function of the prudent man to take good counsel, and no one takes counsel upon what is eternally fixed, nor about anything which does not involve an end in the sense of a good realizable in action. To be of good counsel in the full and proper sense of the term is to be able, after due
7 reckoning, to strike the highest practical good of man. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that prudence is concerned with general principles alone: it implies a knowledge of particulars as well, seeing that it is a practical virtue, and the practical is always something particular. Hence it sometimes happens that, on the same principle as experience in general may be better than theory, one who has no theoretic knowledge is better in practice than those who have it. To take a simple example, suppose one knew that light flesh is digestible and wholesome, but did not know what kinds of flesh are light, he would fail in matters of diet; while the man who only knew that the flesh of fowl is light and wholesome would succeed. Prudence, then, being concerned with conduct, implies a knowledge of the

particular as well as of the universal—in fact, the former is the more important element, though it can never dispense with controlling principles.

[viii.] Prudence and statesmanship or politics are the same faculty manifested in different ways. As applied to affairs of state its highest form is the legislative faculty. On the other hand, the species which is concerned with details of administration has appropriated the generic name of politics. This latter manifests itself in deliberation and action, for it aims at coming to a resolution or verdict, and resolution precedes action. This is the reason why the name politician is sometimes applied exclusively to those who exercise this faculty, for they alone are actively engaged, like craftsmen, in the conduct of affairs. 1 2

Prudence in the most general sense has several forms. (1) First and foremost it means the management of our own particular affairs. It is to this species that the generic term prudence or insight is commonly applied. Of the other forms, besides the legislative faculty already mentioned, we have (2) the science of household management and (3) that of state management, the last being again divided into the (*a*) deliberative and (*b*) the judicial faculty.* . . . Yet we 3 4

* The following table may make this classification clear :—


Prudence in widest sense.
Prudence (in narrower sense of care for individual good).
Household managements (Economics).
State management = Politics (in wider sense).
Legislative faculty = Politics (in narrower sense).
Administrative faculty.
Deliberative.
Judicial.

must not suppose that it is possible to separate our individual affairs from those of the family or the community to which we belong, or that it is clear, apart from special study, how we ought to administer them. . . .

1 [ix.] We must next* ask what Good Counsel means. . . .
3 As taking bad counsel means to be wrong, and taking good counsel to be right, good counsel must clearly be a kind of rightness.

4 Now, there are many kinds of rightness, and plainly good counsel does not include every kind. For example, the incontinent or the vicious man will attain what he wants by calculation, using right counsel though reaping only great evil; but to be of good counsel is held to be a good, for it is only a particular kind that is called "good"
5 counsel, viz. that which reaches a good end. Again, the end may be good and still the reasoning false. We may know the end we ought to aim at, but err as to the means by a false use of the middle term in the minor premise.† So that even when the conclusion is right, we can only speak
6 of good counsel if the reasons are right also. Again, one man may reach a right conclusion slowly, another quickly. So that we require to add a still further qualification, and define good counsel as right thinking where our interests are concerned, end and means and time being what they ought to be.

7 Finally, good counsel may be used in an absolute sense, or relatively to some particular end. Good counsel, in the former sense, is right thinking as to the means of realizing the supreme end of life; in the latter, right thinking as to the means of realizing some particular end. Granting, then, that

* Taking up c. vii. § 6 (above, p. 268), where it is shown that good counsel is an element in prudence.

† See Grant's example, quoted p. 142.

to take good counsel is characteristic of the prudent man, good counsel must be defined as *right judgment as to the proper means of attaining the end which Prudence truly conceives*.

[x.] Intelligence and Good Intelligence, with their co- 1
relatives intelligent and of good intelligence, are identical neither with science and opinion generally (if they were every one would be intelligent) nor with any one of the special sciences, *e.g.* medicine, which deals with health, or geometry, whose subject is magnitudes. Nor is intelligence concerned with universal laws, nor among particular events with those of every kind; but only with those which suggest practical difficulties and upon which counsel may be taken. Intelligence is thus applied to the same objects as prudence, but is a different faculty. Prudence issues commands: it 2
aims at deciding what ought, and what ought not to be done; whereas intelligence merely sits by and judges. Intelligence means neither the possession nor the acquisition of prudence. But just as the learner is said to show intelligence 3
when he applies the knowledge he has been taught by another, so good intelligence consists in applying what one knows to judge of the statements of another upon questions that fall within the sphere of prudence, and withal to judge rightly—good and right being here identical. From the use of 4
intelligence as shown in learning comes the use of the word as applied to the man of good intelligence generally, seeing that we often use "understanding" and "showing intelligence" as convertible terms.

[xi.] What we call Sense—the quality of people whom 1
we describe as sensible or having sense—is the acquired faculty of coming to a right decision on matters of equity. The ordinary usage of language supports this definition. For we call the equitable man a sensible person, and identify

equity with common-sense in certain matters—common-sense being the sense that enables us to come to a right and equitable decision, *i.e.* one which is in harmony with the truth.

2 All these qualities find their centre, as we might suppose, in the same type of character, for we ascribe good sense and intelligence and prudence and reason to the same people, saying of them that they are reasonable as well as prudent and intelligent. They all imply the power of dealing with circumstances and handling details : intelligence, good sense, and common sense being the power of coming to a decision on matters that fall within the province of prudence, and equity being a property common to all good men in their relations to others. . . .

7 We have now defined the nature of prudence and wisdom and the province of each, and have seen that each is the excellence of a separate element of mind.

1 [xii.] The question, however, may be raised—what is the use of them? For wisdom, in the speculative sense, is not concerned with the conditions of human happiness, or, indeed, with anything that is produced. Prudence, it is true, is concerned with happiness, but it may still be asked why it should be necessary as a condition of it? The province of prudence, we have seen, is what is just and noble and good for man, *i.e.* all that it is characteristic of a good man to do. But if, as we have seen, the virtues are trained habits, we shall get no more help in conduct from theoretic knowledge than we should in the healthy and normal functions of the body (in so far, at any rate, as these are the manifestations of a sound state of health, and not themselves the causes of health). In the case of the latter we should be none the better for possessing a scientific knowledge of the principles

of medicine or gymnastics. And if it be said that we require 2
prudence, not to enable us to do good acts, but to make us good, it may still be objected that it is not much use to those who are good already, nor even to those who are not. For it will be all the same whether one has prudence one's self or follows the prudent counsels of another. It will do just as well to take the advice of another, as we do in matters of health, where, if we wish to be well, we do not require to have recourse to medical study. There is, moreover, the 3
further difficulty that it would be absurd that prudence, being inferior to wisdom, should be master over it, as we should have to suppose, if, as the producer of happiness, it issues directions. These difficulties, which we have hitherto merely been stating, we must now try to solve.

In the first place, then, we must note that these qualities, 4
being virtues or excellencies each of a particular element of the soul, must needs be desirable in themselves, even though neither of them produces any results. But, in the second 5
place, they do, as a matter of fact, produce results. Wisdom, for example, produces happiness, not, indeed, as a knowledge of medicine produces health, but as a healthy condition produces it. For since it is an element in virtue as a whole, the possession and exercise of it must make a man happy. For the full performance of his function, moreover, man 6
requires prudence and moral virtue, virtue securing that the end, and prudence that the means should be right. . . In 7
order, however, fully to meet the objection that prudence does not help us in the practice of what is just and noble, we must carry the question a step further back.

We have already seen that a man may do just things (*e.g.* when he does what the law enjoins against his will, or from ignorance, or for any reason other than the goodness of the act itself), and yet not be a just man, even though he does

what he ought, and all that may be expected of a good man. On the other hand, if a man's action is the outcome of a particular state of mind and character, *i.e.* if it is the outcome of moral choice, and is done for its own sake, the
8 man, we allow, is good. Now, what makes the choice of the end right is moral virtue, but what enables us to discern the proper means to its attainment is not virtue, but some other faculty. Let us dwell on this point a moment in order to make it clear.

9 There is a faculty which we call cleverness. It is the faculty which enables a man to find the means to any particular end, and so to attain the end itself. If, then, the end is noble, the faculty is a virtue; if the end is bad, it
10 is roguery. Hence we sometimes call even prudent men clever rogues. Prudence, however, is something different from cleverness, though it cannot exist without it. What gives character to this "eye of the soul," as we have already said, and as is indeed obvious, is moral virtue. For the reasonings we apply to conduct start from some principle, viz. "the end, or what is *best*, is so and so" (whatever it may be, for sake of the argument we may call it anything). But only the good man views this end in the proper light, while vice distorts and falsifies the principles of conduct. From which it clearly follows that a man cannot be prudent or have insight unless he is good.

1 [xiii.] Let us now return to the question of the nature of goodness. For moral virtue proper stands to natural virtue as prudence stands to cleverness. Every one is agreed that there is a sense in which all moral qualities may be regarded as natural endowments. Justice, temperance, courage, and all the other virtues manifest themselves from the moment of our birth. Yet goodness in the full and proper sense, which is the object of our search, is something different

from this, and is attained on other terms. For these innate capacities for virtue are found in children, and even in brutes, but, when unenlightened by reason, are plainly mischievous. It is at any rate true that just as strong bodies when they move blindly fall heavily, through not having the use of their eyes, so natural virtue is apt to come to grief. On the other hand, if enlightened by 2
reason it is the most promising of all. In this case the natural faculty will develop into the fully formed virtue which it previously resembled. So that just as on the intellectual side we have the two forms cleverness and prudence, so on the moral side we have natural and fully developed virtue, and of these the latter cannot exist without prudence.

This explains why some have held that the virtues are all 3
forms of prudence, and how Socrates was partly right and partly wrong in his theory. He was wrong in holding that all virtue is a form of prudence, but right in holding that no virtue can exist without prudence. This is shown in the 4
common definition of virtue. For every one in defining it, after stating that it falls under the head of a habitual attitude, adds that it is the right and reasonable attitude, right here meaning wise and prudent. So that common opinion seems to have an intuitive perception of the truth that such an attitude or formed habit, viz. the prudent one, is what we understand by virtue. It requires correction, 5
however, in one small respect. For virtue is not only the right and reasonable attitude, but the attitude which leads to right and reasonable choice, and right and reasonable choice in these matters is what we mean by prudence. We may say, then, that whereas Socrates held that the virtues were *forms* of reason (for he held that they were all forms of knowledge), our theory amounts to saying that they are all

6 *reasonable.* It is plain, therefore, from all that we have said, that it is impossible to be good in the proper sense of the term without prudence, or prudent without moral goodness.

We are thus able, moreover, to meet the argument that might be brought to prove that the virtues are separate and independent of one another on the ground that nature may not have been equally generous to the same individual with respect to all of them, having given him one but withheld another. This, we shall reply, is quite possible with respect to what we have called natural virtues, but it is not possible with respect to the virtues which constitute goodness in the full sense. For given the single virtue of prudence all the virtues necessarily follow from it.

7 We thus see, in the first place, that even though it does not assist practice, prudence is still necessary as the excellence of an essential part of our nature; and, secondly, that there can be no right choice without both prudence and virtue, seeing that the latter secures the choice of the right end, and the former the choice of the right means to its attainment.

8 With regard to the objection that we thus make prudence master over wisdom, and so over the superior element of our nature, this is not true, any more than that we make the science of medicine master over health. Prudence does not employ wisdom in its service: it provides for its exercise. It dictates directions for its advantage but not for its guidance. To assert the contrary is as though one were to say that the science of statesmanship governs the gods because it gives directions about everything in the State, and about Divine Worship among other things.

XI.

WISDOM, OR PHILOSOPHY.

[x. vii.] If happiness consists in the exercise of virtue, 1
we may suppose that the highest happiness consists in the exercise of the highest virtue or excellence, and this will be the excellence of the noblest faculty. Now, this faculty—be it reason or something else—which seems naturally to command and take the lead, and to be concerned with all that is noble and divine, whether it be itself divine, or merely the divinest part of us, is that faculty the exercise of which, according to its own proper excellence, will constitute perfect happiness. We have already seen that Contemplation answers to this description. And this would 2
appear to correspond not only with what has been already said, but with what we know to be true.

For, in the first place, this form of activity is the highest of which we are capable, reason being the highest of the faculties with which we are endowed, and its object the highest of knowable realities. In the second place, it is the most continuous, for we can keep it up longer than any other action. Thirdly, we hold that pleasure is one of the 3
elements in happiness, and philosophy is admittedly the pleasantest of the activities in which human excellence manifests itself. The pleasures of philosophy at least appear to be wonderfully pure and reliable, nor indeed is it surprising

if the life of the connoisseur is pleasanter than that of the
4 learner. Fourthly, the self-sufficiency people speak of belongs to the life of contemplation more than to any other. The philosopher cannot indeed, any more than the just man or any one else, dispense with the necessaries of life; but when a due measure of these has been provided, the just man requires other people towards whom, and together with whom, he may act justly; and similarly the temperate, the brave man, and all the rest. But the thinker is able to pursue his studies in solitude, and the more of a thinker he is, the more capable he is of doing so. True, he is greatly assisted by the co-operation of others, yet he is more self-sufficient
5 than any other. Fifthly, philosophy alone would appear to be loved for its own sake. For there need be no results further than the exercise of the faculty of thought itself; whereas in the field of practical activity we always achieve (more or less) some result over and above the action itself.

6 Finally, happiness appears to imply leisure. We engage in business that we may have leisure, as we wage war that we may have peace. Now, the practical virtues find the field of their exercise in war or politics, which cannot be said to be leisurely employments, least of all war. For no one chooses to go to war or prepares for war for the sake of war. Any one who set his friends at enmity with one another for the sake of the battles and slaughter that would ensue, would be a most bloodthirsty villain. Even politics is anything but a leisurely occupation, seeing that, over and above the business itself, it brings power and honour, or at least a happiness to the politician himself and to his fellow-citizens which is different from political activity, and is treated separately by us obviously because it is something
7 different. War and politics, then, surpass in grandeur and nobility every other field which calls forth high qualities of

character; but they lack leisure, and are means to a further end rather than ends in themselves. On the other hand, the exercise of reason in philosophy appears to possess a higher dignity, is no mere means to a further end, brings with it a peculiar pleasure of its own (which also stimulates to increased activity), is self-sufficient, leisurely, inexhaustible (so far as anything human can be inexhaustible), in a word possesses all the attributes we ascribe to the happy life.

From all this it follows that it is in the exercise of reason 8
that man's completest happiness is found, provided that we add a complete term of years, for happiness is incompatible with any kind of incompleteness. Such a life may be something more than human. It will express not mere human nature, but the divine element within it, the exercise of which as far surpasses the exercise of the other faculties, however excellent, as this divine element itself surpasses composite human nature. If, then, as compared with ordinary human nature reason be something divine, the life of reason, as compared with the ordinary life of man, may also be called divine. Nevertheless, we shall refuse to listen to those who advise us, being human and mortal, to mind things that are human and mortal. On the contrary, as far as possible, we ought to try to put off our mortality and do all we can to live the life to which the highest element in us points. For though it be but a small part of us, yet in power and value it far surpasses all the others. Moreover, it would seem to be the real self in 9
each of us, since it is sovereign over all and better than all. And accordingly it would be strange if we were not to choose the life of our own true selves, but of something other than ourselves.

The conclusion at which we have now arrived agrees, moreover, with the principle we have already laid down,

that to every creature the best and the pleasantest is that which is naturally proper to it. Accordingly, the life of reason may be expected to be the best and the pleasantest to man, seeing that it is the truest expression of himself. This life, then, will be the most truly happy one.

XII.

FRIENDSHIP.

I.

[VIII. i.] WE must next discuss Friendship. For Friend- 1
ship is one of the virtues, or at any rate implies virtue. Moreover, it is one of the prime necessities of life. No one would desire to live if he had no friends, even although he were endowed with every other good gift. The rich and powerful require friends even more than others. For why should a man desire good fortune of this kind if it did not bring with it the power to benefit others, a power which finds its chief and most laudable exercise in his relation to his friends? Or, again, how would fortune be kept and preserved if it were not for friends, seeing that the greater it is, the more precarious? In poverty, again, and in every 2
kind of misfortune, we consider our friends the only refuge. In youth we need them to keep us from error; in old age to tend us and to do for us what we no longer can do for ourselves; in our prime we need them as allies in noble actions—"shoulder to shoulder," as they say—giving us power both to think and act. Friendship has, moreover, a 3
natural basis in the feeling of parent for offspring and offspring for parent—not only among human beings, but among birds and most of the lower animals—and in the feeling which members of the same race, and especially of

the human race, bear to one another. This explains why we praise lovers of their kind. Indeed you may see, even in travelling abroad, how kinship brings men together and
4 makes them friends. Friendship, again, is the bond of civic life, and is considered by legislators to be more important than justice. For concord is akin to friendship, and is what legislators chiefly aim at securing. Dissension, on the other hand, they seek more than anything else to banish as an enemy. If citizens be friends there is no need of justice, whereas if they are just they still need friendship as well. Moreover, equity, which is the highest form of justice, is the very spirit of friendship.

5 But not only is friendship a necessity of our nature, it is also an element in the noble life. For we praise those who love their friends, and consider it a noble thing to have many friends. Some even think that a good man is the same as a friend.

6 Nevertheless, there are not a few difficult questions which arise in connection with friendship. Thus, some people hold that it is founded on similarity, and that those who resemble one another make friends—whence the sayings, "like to like," "birds of a feather," and so on. Others, again, maintain on the contrary that "potter hates potter,"
7 and that those of a trade never agree. . . . Again, we may ask whether friendship can exist among any kind of persons, or is only possible between good people, and whether there is only one form of friendship or several. . . .

II.

1 [ii.] It will help us to answer these questions if we know what kinds of things are likeable. For we only like what

is likeable, and this seems to be of three kinds—what is good, what is pleasant, and what is useful. . . .

[iii.] We have, then, three kinds of friendship corresponding to these three objects of liking, each of which may be the basis of a reciprocal affection which is known to both. For those who are friends desire for one another the good which is the source of their liking for one another. Those whose friendship, then, is founded on utility do not love their friends for what they are in themselves, but only for the advantage which they receive from them. And the same is true of those whose friendship is based on pleasure. People do not love an amusing companion because he is a man of a particular character, but because he gives them pleasure. When, therefore, friendship is founded on utility, men love their friends for the advantage they bring; when it is founded upon pleasure, for the pleasure. They do not love them for being what they are in themselves, but for being useful or pleasant. Such friendship may therefore be said to be accidental. A man is loved not for what he is, but for what he brings—advantage or pleasure. 1 2

Such Friendships are easily dissolved, as people change in these respects, and if they are no longer pleasant or useful to one another they cease to be friends. Thus what is for a man's advantage is never the same, but changes from time to time. When, therefore, the motive of the friendship is gone, the friendship also is destroyed, since it only existed for this particular object. This kind of friendship exists chiefly between elderly people—for at that time of life a man looks to utility rather than to pleasure—and between young and middle-aged men who have an eye to their own advantage. Such persons do not as a rule live together; sometimes even disliking one another's society. Accordingly, they have no desire for such close intercourse unless they 3 4

are useful to one another, seeing that they only find pleasure in one another so far as they entertain the hope of benefit.

5 The motive of the friendship of young people, on the other hand, is pleasure. Young people live by feeling, and have a main eye to their own pleasure and to the present moment. But pleasures at that age alter rapidly. And as friendship changes with the things that give them pleasure, it is quickly come and quickly gone with their friendships. Young people, moreover, easily fall in love, and love for the most part is passionate, and has pleasure for its object. Hence they make friends, and soon throw them over, changing many times in the same day. Friends of this kind, however, choose to spend their time together, and to live together. For it is thus that they gain the object of their friendship.

6 The friendship of the good, and of those who have the same virtues, is perfect friendship. For such people equally wish each other good in so far as they are good (it is their essential character to be good), and those who wish well to their friends for their own sake are friends in the highest sense. For they do so on account of what they are in themselves, and not on account of any accidental quality. Such friendship therefore endures so long as each retains his character, and virtue is a lasting thing. Moreover, each is not only good absolutely, but good to his friend, good people being both absolutely good, and good and useful to one another. So, too, of the pleasure they give. They are pleasant both in themselves and to each other. For each man finds his own actions and those that resemble them pleasant, and the actions of the good are the same or

7 similar. Such friendship, as we might expect, is lasting. For all the conditions of friendships meet in it. . . .

The love and friendship of such people, then, is the truest

and best. But, as we might expect, it is rare, as such 8
people are scarce; moreover, it requires time and familiar intercourse. We can only know one another, as the proverb says, after we have eaten the proper amount of salt together; nor can people accept one another as friends, or properly be friends, until each has shown himself lovable to the other, and has gained his confidence. Those who quickly come 9
to act as friends to one another may wish to be friends, but they are not really so unless they are not only lovable but know one another to be so. The wish for friendship is of rapid growth, but friendship itself is not.

[iv.] This kind of friendship, then, is perfect and 1
complete, both in point of time and in all other respects, each of the friends rendering to each the same or similar services—as ought to be the case with friends. . . . The 3
friendship of good men, too, is the only kind that is proof against calumny, as a man will not easily believe anything of a man who has been long proved by him. In such friendships, too, we find mutual faith, respect for each other's rights, and everything else that we value in true friendship. In the other kinds, on the contrary, there is no security against any form of wrong. . . .

[v.] And just as in the case of the virtues generally we 1
sometimes say a man's character is good, at other times that his actions are good, so in the case of friendship. Those who live together delight in one another's society, and perform friendly offices; those, on the other hand, who are asleep or separated from one another locally are capable of performing friendly acts, but do not actually perform them. For locality merely destroys the active offices of friendship, but not friendship itself. On the other hand, if the absence be for long, even friendship is forgotten, whence the saying—

"Many indeed are the friends whom distance and silence estranges."

4 Friendship differs from affection in that the latter is a feeling, the former a trained habit of mind. We have affection for lifeless, not less than for living things; but we return the love of friends by choice, and choice is determined by character and trained habit. Moreover, we wish well to our friends for their own sake, not because of the affection we feel for them, but because we are the men to do it. . . .

3 [viii.] Friendship, again, consists in loving rather than in being loved. A proof of this is the delight that mothers have in loving their children. For a mother will give her children to others to nurse, and love them because she knows them, not seeking to be loved in return (if both are impossible), but satisfied to see them faring well, and loving them even though they are too unconscious to repay any of the
4 debt of kindness they owe a mother. And as friendship consists more in loving than in being loved, and praise is given to those who love their friends, to love may be said to be the special excellence of friends, so that when people love one another for their worth they are stable themselves, and their friendship is a stable one.

1 [ix.] Friendship and justice, as we saw at the outset, cover the same field, and exist in the same people. In every association a particular kind of justice is required, corresponding to a particular kind of friendship. Fellow-voyagers, at any rate, and fellow-soldiers address one another as friends; and so do the members of all other forms of association. To whatever extent they are associated, to that extent we shall find friendship existing between them, for to that extent there must be justice. . . .

5 But all these associations are subordinate to the association of citizens as such, which looks not to the interests of
6 the moment, but to the interests of life as a whole. . . . The political association therefore stands to the others, each

with its appropriate form of friendship, as the whole to the parts. . . .

III.

[IX. iv.] Friendly relations to others and the characteristics by which we define friendship find their explanation in the relations of a man to himself. A friend is one who wishes well, and does well, or what appears to be well, by another for that other's sake; or, again, who wishes long life to his friend for his own sake, just as mothers do to their children, or friends who have had a difference do to one another. According to another view, he is one who spends his time with another and likes the same things, or who sympathizes with his friend's joys and sorrows, which also is a marked feature of the maternal relation, and in one form or another is the specific attribute of friendship. 1 2

But the good man feels all this towards himself (though other people also feel it in so far as they think themselves good, virtue and the good man being, as we have said, everywhere the standard). For he is at one with himself, and desires the same things with every part of his soul, wishing for himself both what is and what seems good, and doing good to himself (it being the mark of a good man to make a business of good), all for his own sake, *i.e.* for the sake of the rational part of him, which is his real self, wishing also that he may live and be preserved, and especially that his reason may live. For mere existence is good to the good, and every man desires goods for himself, though no one would choose to have all goods on condition that he should be other than he is. God, indeed, has all good, but only in virtue of being what he is. And a man's reason may be said to make a man either wholly or in chief part what he is. Such a man, again, wishes 3 4 5

to spend his life with himself, for his own company is pleasant to him. The memory, too, of his past life is happy and his hopes for the future are good, and because they are good are sweet. Moreover, his mind is stored with fine thoughts. He sympathizes to the full with himself in sorrow and in joy, the same things at all times giving him pleasure and pain, instead of different things at different times. For he is not the man, as we might say, to change his mind on this point. Since all these characteristics mark the good man's relations to himself, and since his relations to his friend are the same as his relations to himself (for a friend is a second self), friendship may be defined by means of one or other of these characteristics, and friends may be said to be persons in whom these characteristics exist. . . .

7 But the said characteristics appear to be found in most men, even though they are not the best sort. We may therefore suppose that such persons share them in so far as they feel satisfied with themselves, and suppose themselves to be good, seeing that not only are they not found in anyone who is utterly worthless and impious, but there is not
8 even a suggestion of them. And we might almost say that all really bad men lack them. For such men are at war with themselves: craving one thing and wishing another, like the incontinent man, choosing what is pleasant and hurtful, instead of what they see to be good for them. At other times they are prevented by cowardice and sloth from doing what they think is best. Sometimes those who have committed a number of crimes, and are detested for their wickedness, even come to hate life, and seek to destroy
9 themselves. The bad, moreover, desire the company of others, but avoid their own. For there is much that is painful to them in their memories of the past, and the anticipations they have of the future when they are by

themselves are likewise fraught with pain—from all which the company of others offers an escape. Having nothing lovable about them they have, moreover, no friendly feelings towards themselves. They therefore feel no sympathy either with their own joys or sorrows, for their soul is torn by faction, one part of it because of its viciousness feeling sorrow at having to abstain, another part feeling pleasure, and thus dragging them hither and thither, and nearly rending them in pieces. . . . If such a condition is consummately miserable, the moral is to shun vice, and strive after virtue with all one's might. For in this way we shall at once have friendly feelings towards ourselves and become the friends of others. . . .

[vi.] One characteristic of friendship seems to be unanimity, which is thus something different from agreement in opinion. For we may agree with people whom we do not even know. Nor do we call people who hold the same views upon *anything* unanimous, *e.g.* on questions in astronomy (agreement on these subjects being no proof of friendship). On the other hand, we say that cities are unanimous when the citizens are of one mind on questions of public advantage, *e.g.* when they agree upon a policy, and carry out the decision they have arrived at in common. It is on questions of conduct, then, that unanimity exists between people. The question must be one of some importance, and the advantage such as both or all the parties concerned may share. Thus a country is of one mind when all the citizens are agreed that the public offices should be elective, or that an alliance should be entered into with a neighbouring state, or that a particular minister should come into power at a time when he is himself willing to do so. On the other hand, when each wishes office for himself, as in the Phœnissæ of Euripides, we have faction. . . .

3 Unanimity would thus seem to be friendship among citizens, or, to use the common phrase, political friendship. For it exists on questions of the public advantage and on all that touches life. And this is the kind of unanimity that subsists between good men. For they are of one mind, both with themselves and with others, standing, so to speak, on the same ground, and having wishes that are stable, and do not ebb and flow like the Euripus. They desire what is just and for the public advantage, and unite their efforts to
4 attain it. Bad men, on the contrary, cannot be unanimous, except for a short time, any more than they can be friends. They try to get more than their share of the advantages that are going, and to take less than their share of the work and public service, and as each seeks an advantage for himself he keeps his eye on his neighbour, and acts as a check upon him; if he fails to do so the public interest is sacrificed. They are thus in a constant state of sedition, trying to force one another to do what is right, but unwilling to do it themselves.

IV.

1 [vii.] Benefactors seem to love those they have benefited more than those who have received the benefit love their benefactors, and the question is sometimes asked what is the reason of this apparent paradox? The reason most commonly given is that the one are debtors, the others creditors. So that, just as a borrower wishes the lender dead, whereas the lender is anxious for the welfare of the borrower, benefactors desire the welfare of those whom they have benefited, in order that they may receive favours in return, whereas the benefited are not interested in repaying them. Epicharmus would say, perhaps, that those who hold this view "look at the play from a bad seat," but it is a

natural enough one, as most people have short memories, and would rather have a benefit done them than confer one themselves.

The true reason, however, would seem to go deeper. 2
There is here no real analogy with borrowing. A creditor does not love his debtor, he merely wishes him to live in order that he may get the money back. But those who have done a good turn have a real affection for those to whom they have done it, even although they expect no profit, either present or future, in return. It is the same in 3
handicraft. Every one loves the work of his own hands more than he would be loved by it if it had a soul to love. Perhaps poets carry this furthest. For the poet has an exaggerated opinion of his own poems, loving them as a father loves his children. This is the true analogy to the 4
case before us. The man who confers a benefit sees his own handiwork in the man who receives it. He therefore loves him more than the work loves its maker. And the reason is that every one loves and desires existence, and it is by the active discharge of function (*i.e.* by living and acting) that we exist. But what a man makes is, so to speak, a realization of himself. He therefore loves his work for the same reason as he loves existence. And this is natural, as that which a thing potentially is becomes manifest in actuality by what it makes or does. Moreover, his own 5
action is something beautiful in the eyes of the man who confers a benefit, so that he delights in the object of it; whereas the receiver of the benefit sees nothing beautiful in his benefactor. If he sees anything it is merely his profit, which is neither so sweet nor so lovable. But, to the other 6
not only the present act but the hope for the future and the memory of the past is sweet. But sweetest of all and most lovable, is the actual realization of himself. His work, then,

is an abiding possession to the maker of it (for beauty endures), whereas the profit of the receiver is quickly gone. There is pleasure, moreover, in the memory of what is finely done, little or none in the memory of what is merely profitable (although with expectation it seems to be just the reverse). Moreover, loving a man is analogous to doing or making something, being loved to having something done to one. And thus it is that love and feelings of friendship naturally rise in those who choose the better part in action.

7 Finally, every one loves more what has cost him trouble—just as those who have made money love it more than those who merely inherit it—and there is no trouble in receiving a benefit, whereas there is labour in well-doing. It is on the same principle that mothers love their children better than fathers, for they have labour in bearing them and a fuller assurance that they are their very own. And this would seem to be a characteristic of benefactors also.

1 [viii.] The question has also been raised whether we ought to love ourselves or others best. We blame those who love themselves better than anybody else, calling them self-loving by way of reproach. Moreover, all the actions of the bad man seem to be done with an eye to himself; the more so the worse he is, and accordingly we reproach him with doing nothing in a disinterested way. But the good man acts with an eye to what is noble, the more so the better he is, and for the sake of his friend puts his own
2 interest in the background. On the other hand, facts are against this view, and not unnaturally, for it is urged that one ought to love him most who is most a friend—in other words, the man who wishes well to his friend for the friend's sake even though nobody knows it. But a man has this

feeling as well as all the other feelings that are characteristic of friendship towards himself in a higher degree than to any one else. For we have already seen that a man's friendly feelings towards others are merely an extension of his feeling towards himself. All the proverbs, moreover, agree with this, *e.g.* "one in soul," "the property of friends is common," "equality makes friendship," "the knee is nearer than the shin,"—all which are more applicable to one's self than to others, for a man is his own best friend. Both of these two views have a great deal to say for themselves. Which is the true one?

In such cases the best way is to distinguish and define 3
to what extent, and in what sense each is true. If, then, we understand the exact sense in which the term "self-loving" is used in each case we shall perhaps be able to solve the difficulty. Now, those who use it as a 4
term of reproach call those who assign to themselves the larger share of money, honour, and the pleasures of the body self-loving. For these things are what most people desire and take trouble about, as the best to be had. Hence they are objects of keen competition. People who are greedy of these things gratify their desires and their passions generally, *i.e.* the irrational part of their nature. And as the majority are of this character, the term in its primary use reflects the meanness of its origin, and the self-love of such men is justly held up to reproach. That most 5
people are accustomed to call those who assign these things to themselves lovers of themselves is obvious. For if any one were anxious to excel others in justice, temperance, or any other kind of virtue, and always coveted the noble act for himself, no one would call him selfish or blame him. Yet such a man would in a truer sense be a lover of 6
himself. For he assigns what is noblest and best to himself,

and gratifies the sovereign element in his nature, obeying it in everything. And just as the sovereign element in the state, or in any other system, seems more than anything else to *be* the state or system, so it is with man. He is most self-loving who loves and gratifies this part of his nature. Moreover, a man is called continent or incontinent according as reason rules within him or not, seeing that each man is his reason. And actions which are done with reason are held to be his own and voluntary in the highest sense. Clearly, then, this is what makes the man (or makes him most truly) what he is, and the good man more than any other loves this part of himself. More than any other, therefore, he will love himself, though in a sense other than the man we reproach with self-love, from whom he will differ as much as living according to reason differs from living by passion, or desiring what is noble from desiring what seems to be
7 profitable. Those, then, who, beyond all others, are jealous of noble actions are welcomed and praised by everybody. And if all men were to vie with one another in what is noble, and to strive to act in the noblest way, not only would all the common needs be supplied, but individuals would obtain the greatest of goods, for this is precisely what virtue is.

We see, then, that the good man ought to love himself, for by acting nobly he will both benefit himself and assist
8 others. The bad man, on the other hand, ought not to love himself, seeing that by following impulses which are not the best he will injure both himself and others. There is thus a discord in the case of the bad man between what he ought to do and what he does. Whereas the good man does what he ought to do, for reason always chooses what is best for self, and the good man follows reason.

9 It is true, moreover, of the good man that he does many things for the sake of his friends and of his country. If

need be he will die for them. For he will throw away money and honours and everything that men commonly strive for, claiming for himself what is noble. And he will prefer a brief period of deep delight to a long period of mild delight, a year of noble living to many years of ordinary existence, one great and noble action to many insignificant ones. (This, I suppose, is what a man does when he dies for others. He chooses something great and noble for himself.) And he will give away money in order that his friends may have more. For the money goes to his friend but the noble deed to himself, and in this way he appropriates the greater good. Similarly with regard to honours and offices. He 10
will resign all these to his friend, for this he deems noble and praiseworthy. Rightly then is his goodness held in high esteem, for he chooses what is noble in preference to everything else. It is even possible to surrender actions to a friend, as it may be nobler to cause a friend to do them than to do them one's self. It is clear, then, that in 11
all that is lovely and of good report the good man assigns the larger share to himself. After this manner, as already said, a man ought to love himself, but not after the manner of the multitude.

[ix.] A further question may be raised as to whether the 1
happy man will need friends or not. Some say that those who are blessed and self-sufficient have no need of friends, since they have all good things already, and those who are self-sufficient need nothing more, whereas a friend, being a second self, supplies what a man cannot have by himself. As Euripides says—

"If God hath blest, what need of friends?"

On the other hand, it seems strange, when assigning every 2
kind of good to the happy man, not to assign him friends,

who are thought to be the greatest of external goods. Moreover, if it is more characteristic of a friend to confer benefits than to receive them, and if to do good is the mark of a good man and a virtuous character, and if, further, it is nobler to benefit one's friends than strangers, the good man will require friends to benefit. And this raises the further question whether one requires friends more in good or in bad fortune, seeing that when we are unfortunate we want some one to help us, when fortunate some one whom we
3 ourselves may help. Moreover, it would surely be ridiculous to condemn the truly happy man to solitude. For no one would choose to have all good things to himself, inasmuch as man is a political being, and made for society. The happy man must therefore have this good also, seeing that he has everything that is naturally good for man, and that it is plainly better to spend one's time with friends, and with *good* friends, than with strangers and casual people. Whence the conclusion is drawn that the happy man must have friends.

4 What do those who hold the former of these two views mean, and in what sense are they right? Most people think, do they not, that those who are useful to us are our friends? Now, the truly happy man will not want friends of this kind, seeing that he already has every good. Similarly, he will have little or no need of friendship which is founded on pleasure—his life being pleasant in itself does not want any adventitious pleasure—and as he does not need friends of this kind people think that he does not want friends at
5 all. But this is surely wrong. For, as we said at the outset, happiness is a form of activity, and it is clear that an activity or function is something that we perform, not something that belongs to us as a possession. Happiness, then, consists in living and in the active discharge of function.

Moreover, the activity of the good man is good and pleasant in itself, as we saw at the outset, for it is his own, and what is our own is pleasant. Now, a man gets a better view of others than of himself, and of their actions than of his own. From which it follows that actions of good men who are his friends give pleasure to the good man, inasmuch as in being good and his own they possess both the conditions of true pleasure. The truly happy man, therefore, will want friends of this kind, since he desires to have a good view of actions which are virtuous and which are his own, and the actions of a good man who is a friend answer to this description. Further, it is commonly admitted that the life of the happy man must needs be a pleasant one. But isolation makes life hard, as it is difficult to sustain one's energy in solitude, but comparatively easy in the company of others or with others in view. In this way an activity pleasant in itself 6
will be more continuous, and this accords with our idea of true happiness. For the good man, as such, delights in acts of virtue, and detests vicious actions, just as the musician delights in beautiful music, but is pained with bad. Finally, a man gets practice in virtue by living on 7
intimate terms with good men, as Theognis says—

["Good wilt thou learn from the good ; but should thy companions be evil
Lost to thee surely shall be all that thy soul hath acquired."]

From a still deeper point of view we may see that to the good man a good friend is a natural object of desire. We have already seen that whatever is naturally good is good and pleasant in itself to the good man. Now, life is defined in the case of the lower animals as the faculty of perceiving ; in the case of man as the faculty of perceiving and thinking. But a faculty realizes itself in function, and the essence

of a thing lies in its function, so that the essence of life may be said to consist of thought and perception. . . .

9 Let us grant, then, that life itself is good and pleasant, as is proved by the fact that all men desire it—the good and truly happy more than anybody else, seeing that it is more desirable to them than to anybody else, and that their life is more truly happy than that of other people. Let us grant, too, that in seeing we perceive that we see; in hearing, that we hear; in walking, that we walk; and so on; in other words, that, besides the faculty itself, we have the faculty of perceiving that we are exercising it, so that when we perceive with the senses we are conscious that we perceive, when we think, that we think. Further, let us grant that to be thus conscious of thought and perception is to be conscious of existence, seeing that we agreed that to exist is to perceive and think, and that consciousness of life is pleasant in itself, since life is naturally good, and consciousness of possessing a good is itself pleasant. Let us grant, again, that life is more desirable to the good than to anybody else, inasmuch as existence is good and pleasant to them, seeing that they take pleasure in the consciousness of

10 that which is in itself a good. And, finally, let us grant that a good man stands in the same relation to his friend as to himself, seeing that his friend is a second self. It follows from all this that the existence of his friend is desirable to each man in the same sense, or in a like sense, as his own existence is desirable to him. But we saw that existence is made desirable by the consciousness that the self is good, and such consciousness is pleasant in itself. A man, therefore requires the consciousness of his friend's existence, which can be obtained by community of life and the intercourse of word and thought. For this is what community of life would seem to mean in the case of man, not merely

feeding in the same place, as in the case of beasts. If, then, existence, which is naturally good and pleasant, is desirable in itself to the truly happy man, and the existence of his friend is as his own, a friend is a desirable possession. But "desirable" means that which we ought to have, and without which we are incomplete. The conclusion, therefore, is that if a man is to be happy he will require good friends.

XIII.

PLEASURE.

1 [x. i.] We must now discuss the question of Pleasure. For this seems to be one of the most fundamental elements in our nature, explaining why in the education of children we use pleasure and pain as a species of rudder. Moreover, it is of the greatest importance in the training of character that children should delight in and dislike the proper things. For these feelings permeate the whole of life, and are a powerful influence in the production of good character, and consequently of happiness, seeing that we
2 choose what is pleasant, and avoid what is painful. This subject, therefore, would appear to be the last we should omit to discuss, especially as it offers many difficulties.

Some hold that pleasure is the good; others, again, hold that, on the contrary, it is wholly evil, some perhaps being really persuaded that it is so, others thinking that it is more edifying to represent pleasure as a bad thing, even though they do not think so, on the ground that most men incline to it, and are the slaves of their pleasures, and that it is necessary accordingly to draw them to the opposite
3 extreme, that in this way they may arrive at the mean. In all this they are no doubt wrong, seeing that where the passions are concerned, and in matters of conduct generally,

words are less convincing than actions. The result is that when their advice is in plain contradiction to the evidence of the senses, they bring contempt upon themselves, and discredit upon truth. If one who depreciates pleasure is yet observed sometimes to make it his object, people think that his inclination to it arises from the belief that it is at all times desirable, for fine distinctions are beyond the mass of mankind. I hold, therefore, that sincerity is best not only 4
for the advance of knowledge, but for the improvement of life. For when our words harmonize with our actions they are believed, and act as an inducement to those who understand their meaning to apply them to practice. But let us return, and in the first place consider the theories as to pleasure.

[ii.] Eudoxus [1] maintained that pleasure was the good for 1
several reasons. In the first place, he said that all creatures, both rational and irrational, desire it, and that what is desired is good, and what is most desired is best for every creature. The fact, then, that all creatures are drawn to the same object proves that this is the best for them all (every being seeking its own good as it seeks its own food); and that which is good for all, and which all desire, is the good. This theory owed its acceptance not so much to the arguments by which it was supported as to the character of Eudoxus, who had the highest reputation for temperance. It was therefore thought that he held these views not because he was a lover of pleasure, but because they really were true. Secondly, 2
he held that their truth was proved equally from the opposite side, pain being in itself a universal object of aversion, and therefore its opposite an object of desire. Thirdly, that is most desirable which we desire for its own sake, not by reason of anything else or for any end beyond itself, and such

[1] Of Cnidus, a distinguished Platonist and astronomer.

admittedly is the character of pleasure. No one asks to what end one is pleased, pleasure being in itself desirable. . . .

4 Those, on the other hand, who, in opposing these arguments, maintain that what all beings desire is not necessarily good, take up a false line. There is a presumption in favour of a belief which is universal, and any one who tries to undermine it commits himself to a hopeless paradox. If only irrational beings desired pleasure there might be something in this reply, but if rational beings also desire it, surely this view must be wrong. Yet even in inferior creatures there may well be a superior principle which desires the good that is proper to them. . . .

4 [iii.] Again, assuming that the good is perfect and complete, while movements and processes are incomplete, the opponents of pleasure try to prove that pleasure is a movement and process of becoming. But they seem to be wrong in holding it to be a movement at all. Every movement is either quick or slow—if not absolutely, like that of the universe, at least relatively to something else. Pleasure, however, is neither quick nor slow. One may be quickly pleased as one may be quickly angry; but the feeling of pleasure cannot be quick even relatively, as can walking, growing, and the like. The passage to pleasure may be quick or slow, but the enjoyment of pleasure, the actual
5 being pleased, cannot be quick. Again, in what sense can it be called a process of coming into being? A thing cannot come into being out of anything indiscriminately, but things are resolved into that out of which they come. Pain must therefore be the dissolution of the elements which pleasure brings into being. [But what are these elements?]

6 A further view is that pain represents a falling short of

the natural state, and pleasure a reinstatement or replenishment. But these are bodily processes. If, then, pleasure is a replenishment, that which is replenished, viz. the body, must be that which feels the pleasure. But this is contrary to fact. Pleasure, then, cannot be a replenishment; but where there is replenishment there is pleasure, where exhaustion, pain. The view in question seems to have been suggested by the pains and pleasures of nutrition. For after suffering the antecedent pain of want of food, we feel pleasure in the satisfaction of the want. But this is not the 7
universal condition of pleasure. The pleasures of mathematics, among the pleasures of sense those of smell as well as many sights and sounds, lastly, hopes and memories —are instances of pleasure which involve no antecedent pain. What, we may ask, do these pleasures bring into being? What is here wanting which can be said to be replenished?

To those, again, who object to pleasure on the ground 8
that some pleasures are disgraceful, we might reply that these are not really pleasant, for what is pleasant to those who are evilly disposed need not be thought to be so to anybody else. (We do not hold that to be wholesome or sweet or bitter, which appears so to the sick man; nor, again, that to be white which seems so to the man with bad eyes.) Or, again, one might reply that the 9
pleasures themselves are desirable, but not when obtained from these sources; just as wealth is desirable, but not to one who has betrayed a trust for it, and health, but not if one has to be on diet all the time. Or, again, it might be pointed 10
out that pleasures differ specifically: those derived from what is noble differ from those which are derived from what is base; nor is it possible to enjoy the pleasures of the just man without being one's self just, any more than the pleasures of

the musical man without being musical one's self, and so with all other pleasures.

11 The difference between the true friend and the flatterer will serve to illustrate the contention that either pleasure is not good, or, if it is, that pleasures differ specifically. The object in the one case is to do good, in the other to give pleasure, and we blame the one and praise the other, thus recognizing that the objects they have in view are different.

12 Moreover, no one would choose to live on condition of having no more intellect than a child all his life, even though he were to enjoy to the full the pleasures of a child; nor, again, to find enjoyment in any base conduct, even though he had the promise of never suffering any pain. Finally, there are many things we should eagerly endeavour to obtain, even although they brought no pleasure with them, *e.g.* sight, memory, knowledge, virtue. And if it be said that pleasure is a necessary accompaniment of these activities, this makes no difference. We should choose them even although no pleasure resulted from them.

13 It seems, therefore, to be established that pleasure is not the good, and that all pleasures are not desirable. On the other hand, some pleasures are desirable in themselves, differing from these last in kind, in other words in the source from which they are derived. So much for current views upon pleasure.

1 [iv.] Let us now ask what pleasure itself is, and with a view to throwing light upon it let us make a new start. . . .

5 The faculties of perception are called into active exercise by an appropriate object. The exercise is perfect when the faculty is sound and the object to which it responds is the highest of those which are appropriate to it. (This seems to be what we mean by the perfect exercise of

function. Whether it is the faculty itself, or that in which the faculty resides is that exercised we need not stop to consider.) In the case, then, of each of the faculties the exercise will be the best possible when the faculty is in the best condition and the object the noblest of those that fall within its scope. Now, this exercise of faculty will be not only the most perfect, but also the pleasantest. For every exercise of perception is accompanied by pleasure, and the same is true of reasoning and speculation, the most perfect being the pleasantest and the most perfect being the exercise which is called forth when the faculty is in its normal condition, and the object the best of those which fall within its scope.

The effect of pleasure is to perfect the exercise of the 6
faculty. But pleasure perfects it in a different way from the object, and the act of perception (when these are of the right kind); just as health causes you to be well in one way, the physician in another. . . . The pleasure perfects 8
the exercise not in the sense in which a pre-existent habit or state does, but as some superadded end, like the grace of youth. . . .

[v.] This will be still more obvious when we consider that 3
the exercise of one faculty is obstructed by the pleasure which comes from another. A man who is fond of the flute cannot attend to an argument if he hears any one playing, the reason being that he takes more pleasure in flute-playing than in the subject on hand. The pleasure of flute-playing obstructs the exercise of the reason. The same 4
thing happens whenever we are engaged in two occupations at once. The pleasanter thwarts the other. If the difference in pleasure is great, it may even inhibit it altogether. Hence, if we take intense delight in any occupation, we are unable to do anything else; on the other hand, if it gives us

only a mild pleasure, we occupy ourselves with other things. Thus when people eat sweetmeats in the theatre, they eat the most when the acting is bad. But since its proper pleasure naturally raises the exercise of any faculty to a higher power by sustaining it for a longer time and improving it, while pleasure from another source injures it, it is plain that these differ widely from one another, pleasure from another source acting very much as pain from the exercise itself. For pain destroys the activity which causes it, *e.g.* when one finds writing or calculation unpleasant: as the activity is painful he ceases to write or calculate. The pleasures and pains, then, that are proper to the exercise of any faculty (by "proper" meaning those that naturally accompany the exercise) affect it in opposite ways, pleasures from other sources acting, as we have seen, in the same way as pain, and destroying the activity, though not to the same extent.

[iv.] The reason why, every one desires pleasure may very well be that every one desires life. Life means the exercise of faculty, and each of us responds with the faculty and to the objects which he likes most, the musician with his ear to music, the student with his intellect to the object of his special study, and so on. But if pleasure perfects the exercise of our faculties, it must also perfect life, which men desire. Hence it is natural that we should desire pleasure, as it perfects that which we all desire, viz. life. Whether we choose life for the sake of pleasure or pleasure for the sake of life, we need not now inquire. They seem to be indissolubly joined together and not to admit of separation: without the exercise of faculty there can be no pleasure, every exercise of faculty is perfected by pleasure.]

[v.] As activities differ in moral quality—some being

desirable, some undesirable, and some indifferent—the same is true of pleasures, as each activity has its own proper pleasure attached to it. The pleasure which is proper to good activity is therefore good; that attached to a bad one is bad. Even the *desire* of what is noble is praised, while the desire of what is disgraceful is blamed. And the pleasures which attach to activities are more closely connected with them than the corresponding desires. The latter are separated from their object in time as well as in nature; while the pleasure coincides with the activity, and is so inseparable from it that there is some doubt whether pleasure and activity are not the same thing. I do not 7
mean to say that pleasure *is* thought or sense-perception (this would be absurd), but its close connection with the process explains why some people hold them to be identical. As, then, activities differ, so do the pleasures which accompany them. Sight differs in purity from touch, hearing and smelling from taste. There is therefore a corresponding difference in their pleasures. The pleasures of thought, again, are purer than those of sense-perception, and among these again there are differences, as there are among the pleasures of sense. Every kind of being, moreover, seems to have its 8
proper pleasure, as each has its proper function—that, namely, which accompanies the exercise of its faculties. Look at the different animals: the pleasures of a horse, a dog, and a man are all different. As Heraclitus says, a donkey will prefer a wisp of hay to a pot of gold—fodder being pleasanter to a donkey than gold.

Pleasures, then, of beings specifically different differ specifically from one another. And we might expect that beings of the same species have the same pleasures. But in the case of man, at least, there is no little difference. For the same 9
things give pleasure to one and pain to another; they are

unpleasant and hateful to some people, pleasant and lovable to others. What is true of sensible qualities—*e.g.* "sweetness," which is one thing to the fever patient another to the healthy, or "heat," which is one thing to the weak man
10 another to the strong—holds also of other things. In all such cases we hold that things are as they appear to the normal man. If we are right in this, as I think we are, and the good man as such is our standard of truth and reality, then what the good man thinks is pleasure will be pleasure, what he delights in will be truly pleasant. Nor need it surprise us if what is disagreeable to him is pleasant to another. For there are many ways in which a man may become corrupt and degenerate, and such things are not pleasant in reality but only to that kind of men, or to others in a similar condition.

11 The conclusion is plain. With regard to the pleasures which all admit to be base, we must deny that they are pleasures at all, except to those whose nature is corrupt. And secondly, coming to those pleasures which are good, let us ask which are characteristic of man. We shall find a clue to the answer if we consider what activities are proper to him, seeing that pleasures take their character from the activities which they accompany. Our answer, therefore, will be: those pleasures which perfect the activity of the perfect and truly happy man, whether this activity be single or manifold, may be called in the truest sense the pleasures of a man. All others, like the activities which they accompany, are so only in a partial and secondary sense.

NOTES.

A (p. 24).

THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL.

"HENCE it is evident that the State is a creation of nature, and that man is by nature a political animal. And he who by nature and not by mere accident is without a State, is either above humanity or below it; he is the

'Tribeless, lawless, hearthless one,'

whom Homer denounces—the outcast who is a lover of war; he may be compared to a bird which flies alone. Thus the State is by nature clearly prior to the family and to the individual, since the whole is of necessity prior to the part; for example, if the whole body be destroyed there will be no foot or hand except in an equivocal sense, as we might speak of a stone hand. For things are defined by their working and power; and we ought not to say that they are the same when they are no longer the same, but only that they have the same name. The proof that the State is a creation of nature, and prior to the individual, is that the individual, when isolated, is not self-sufficing; and therefore he is like a part in relation to the whole. But he who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god; he is no part of a State. A social instinct is implanted in all men by nature, and yet he who first founded the State was the greatest of benefactors. For man, when perfected, is the best of animals; but when separate from law and justice, he is the worst of all;

since armed injustice is the more dangerous, and he is equipped at birth with the arms of intelligence and with moral qualities which he may use for the worst ends. Wherefore, if he have not virtue, he is the most unholy and the most savage of animals, and the most full of lust and gluttony. But justice is the bond of men in States, and the administration of justice, which is the determination of what is just, is the principle of order in political society." *Politics* I. 2 (Jowett's Tr., condensed).

B (p. 25).

ANCIENT AND MODERN ETHICS.

J. S. MILL, who himself to a certain extent is open to the criticism in Chap. I. § 4 above, in a well-known passage in *Liberty* contrasts ancient and modern ethics in both the respects there noted. "Christian morality (so called)," he tells us, "holds out the hope of heaven and the threat of hell, as the appointed and appropriate motives to a virtuous life: in this falling far below the best of the ancients, and doing what lies in it to give to human morality an essentially selfish character by disconnecting each man's feelings of duty from the interests of his fellow creatures, except so far as a self-interested inducement is offered to him for consulting them." "While in the morality of the best Pagan nations, duty to the State holds even a disproportionate place, infringing on the just liberty of the individual; in purely Christian ethics, that grand department of duty is scarcely noticed or acknowledged. It is in the Koran, not the New Testament, that we read the maxim, 'A ruler who appoints any man to an office, when there is in his dominions another man better qualified for it, sins against God and against the State.' What little recognition the idea of obligation to the public obtains in modern morality is derived from Greek and Roman sources." In characterizing the modern ideal in the same passage as "negative rather than positive; passive rather than active; innocence rather than nobleness; abstinence from evil rather than energetic pursuit of good," he suggests a further contrast between Greek and modern ethics — in regard to which George

Meredith seems to be of the same opinion. "Do not despise," he says, in *Evan Harrington*, "a virtue purely Pagan. The young who can act readily up to the Christian light are happier, doubtless; but they are led, they are passive; I think they do not make such capital Christians subsequently. They are never in such danger we know; but some in the flock are more than sheep. The heathen ideal it is not so very easy to attain, and those who mount from it to the Christian have, in my humble thought, a firmer footing."

C (p. 37).
MONEY-MAKING.

"MEN seek after a better notion of wealth, and of the art of making money than the mere acquisition of coin, and they are right. For natural wealth and the natural art of money-making are a different thing; in their true form they are part of the management of a household; whereas there is no bound to the wealth which springs from this art of money-making. But the art of household management has a limit; the unlimited acquisition of money is not its business. And, therefore, in one point of view all wealth must have a limit; nevertheless, as a matter of fact, we find the opposite to be the case; for all money-makers increase their hoard of coin without limit. The source of the confusion is the near connection between the two kinds of money-making; in either, the instrument [*i.e.* wealth] is the same, although the use is different, and so they pass into one another; for each is a use of the same property, but with a difference: accumulation is the end in the one case, but there is a further end in the other. . . . The origin of this disposition in men is that they are intent upon living only, and not upon living well; and as their desires are unlimited, they also desire that the means of gratifying them should be without limit. And if they are not able to supply their pleasures by the art of money-making, they try other arts, using in turn every faculty in a manner contrary to nature. The quality of courage, for example, is not intended to make money, but to inspire confidence; neither is this the aim of the general's or the physician's art, but

the one aims at victory, the other at health. Nevertheless, some men turn every quality or art into a means of making money ; this they conceive to be the end, and to the promotion of the end all things must contribute." *Politics*, I. 9 (Jowett's Tr., condensed).

D (p. 92).

THE PRUDENT MAN.

A CORRESPONDENT writes : "It does not appear to me at all 'verbal' to substitute the 'wise' or 'prudent man' for 'wisdom' or 'prudence.' It is all-important. For what is wisdom? *Ans.* 'What the developed judgment pronounces it to be.' And this is the final and only standard." This objection illustrates what requires to be brought out, viz. that the final standard is not the judgment of an individual, but the organized form of human life which is natural and, therefore, reasonable. Speaking of the Mean in morals and politics, Burke says that it "is not such because it is found there ; but it is found there because it is conformable to truth and nature." We might paraphrase this in the present connexion by saying that the mean is not such because the developed judgment pronounces it to be there, but the developed judgment pronounces it to be there because it is conformable to truth and nature.

E (p. 56).

CIRCUMSTANCES.

AN illustration of the Aristotelian doctrine of the relation of circumstances to happiness comes aptly to hand, in the recently published Letters of R. L. Stevenson.

"I should bear false witness if I did not declare life happy. And your wonderful statement that happiness tends to die out and misery to continue is diagnostic of the happy man raging over the misery of others ; it could never be written of the man who had tried what unhappiness was like. . . . It is easy to have too much ; easy also to have too little ; enough is required that a man may appreciate what elements of consolation and joy

there are in everything but absolutely overpowering physical pain or disgrace, and how in almost all circumstances the human soul can play a fair part. If you have had trials, sickness, and the approach of death, the alienation of friends, poverty at the heels, and have not felt your soul turn round upon these things and spurn them under—you must be very differently made from me, and, I earnestly believe, from the majority of men. I see a universe, I suppose, eternally different from yours; a solemn, a terrible, but a joyous and noble universe, where suffering is not at least wantonly inflicted, though it falls with dispassionate partiality; but where it may be, and generally is, nobly borne; where, above all, any brave man may make out a life which shall be happy for himself, and, by so being, beneficent to those about him." *R. L. Stevenson's Letters to his Family and Friends*, I. 370 (condensed).

F (p. 144).

EQUITY.

"EQUITY makes allowance for human weakness, looking not to the law but to the meaning of the lawgiver, not to the act but to the intention, not to the part but to the whole, not to what a a man is at the moment but to what he is as a rule. Equity remembers benefits received rather than injuries that have been suffered, and benefits received rather than benefits conferred; it is patient under injustice; it is readier to appeal to reason than to force, to arbitration than to law. For the arbitrator looks to what is equitable, whereas the judge sees only the law; indeed arbitration was devised for no other purpose than to secure the triumph of equity." *Rhetoric*, I. c. xiii. § 17.

G (p. 166).

THE USE OF LEISURE.

"AS I must repeat once again, the first principle of all action is leisure. Both are required, but leisure is better than

occupation ; and therefore the question must be asked in good earnest, what ought we to do when at leisure. Clearly we ought not to be amusing ourselves, for then amusement would be the end of life. But if this is inconceivable, and yet amid serious occupation amusement is needed more than at other times, at suitable times we should introduce amusements, and they should be our medicines, for the emotion which they create in the soul is a relaxation, and from the pleasure we obtain rest. It is clear then that there are branches of learning and education which we must study with a view to enjoyment of leisure, and these are to be valued for their own sake ; whereas those kinds of knowledge which are useful in business are to be deemed necessary, and exist for the sake of other things. And therefore our fathers admitted music into education, for, as Odysseus says, there is no better way of passing life than when—

'Men's hearts are merry, and the banqueters in the hall, sitting in order, hear the voice of the minstrel.'

It is evident, then, that there is a sort of education in which parents should train their sons, not as being useful or necessary, but because it is liberal and noble. Further, it is clear that children should be instructed in some useful things—for example, reading and writing—not only for their usefulness, but also because many other sorts of knowledge are acquired through them. With a like view they must be taught drawing, not to prevent their making mistakes in their own purchases, or in order that they may not be imposed upon in the buying or selling of articles, but rather because it makes them judges of the beauty of the human form. To be always seeking after the useful does not become free and exalted souls." *Politics*, VIII. 3 (Jowett's Tr., condensed).

H (p. 182).

UNANIMITY.

THE author of *Virginibus Puerisque* puts this admirably when he writes : "Now this is where there should be community

between man and wife. They should be agreed on their catch-word in '*facts of religion*,' or '*facts of science*,' or '*society, my dear*'; for without such an agreement all intercourse is a painful strain upon the mind.... For there are differences which no habit nor affection can reconcile, and the Bohemian must not intermarry with the Pharisee. Imagine Consuelo as Mrs. Samuel Budgett, the wife of the successful merchant! The best of men and the best of women may sometimes live together all their lives, and, for want of some consent on fundamental questions, hold each other lost spirits to the end."

I (p. 147).

CHARACTER AND INTELLECT.

From the side of education and the training of the moral sentiment, Spencer has some excellent remarks in the spirit of the present passage: "Mere culture of the intellect (and education as usually conducted amounts to little more) is hardly at all operative upon conduct. Intellect is not a power but an instrument—not a thing which itself moves and works, but a thing which is moved and worked by forces behind it. To say that men are ruled by reason is as irrational as to say that men are ruled by their eyes. Reason *is* an eye—the eye through which the desires see their way to gratification. And educating it only makes it a better eye—gives it a vision more accurate and more comprehensive—does not at all alter the desires subserved by it. However far-seeing you make it, the passions will still determine the directions in which it shall be turned—the objects on which it shall dwell. Just those ends which the instincts or sentiments propose will the intellect be employed to accomplish; culture of it having done nothing but increase the ability to accomplish them. Probably some will urge that enlightening men enables them to discern the penalties which naturally attach to wrong-doing; and in a certain sense this is true. But it is only superficially true. Though they may learn that the grosser crimes commonly bring retribution in one shape or other, they will not learn that the subtler ones do.

Their sins will merely be made more Machiavellian. Did much knowledge and piercing intelligence suffice to make men good, then Bacon should have been honest and Napoleon should have been just. Where the character is defective, intellect, no matter how high, fails to regulate rightly, because predominant desires falsify its estimates. Nay, even a distinct foresight of evil consequences will not restrain when strong passions are at work. Whatever moral benefit can be effected by education must be effected by an education which is emotional rather than perceptive. If in making a child *understand* that this thing is right and the other is wrong, you make it *feel* that they are so—if you make virtue *loved* and vice *loathed*—if you arouse a noble *desire*, and make torpid an inferior one—if you bring into life a previously dormant *sentiment*—if you cause a sympathetic *impulse* to get the better of one that is selfish—if, in short, you produce a state of mind to which proper behaviour is *natural*, *spontaneous*, *instinctive*, you do some good. But no drilling in catechisms, no teaching of moral codes, can effect this. Only by repeatedly awakening the appropriate *emotions* can character be changed. Mere ideas received by the intellect, meeting no response from within—having no roots there—are quite inoperative upon conduct, and are quickly forgotten upon entering into life." *Social Statics*, p. 384 foll. (condensed).

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